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PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D., ABERDEEN.

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

A FURTHER STUDY
IN NEW TESTAMENT MORALITY.

BY THE

REV. T. B. KILPATRICK, B.D.,

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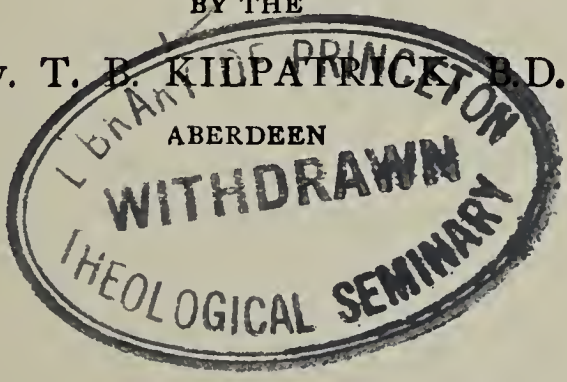

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CHRISTIAN CONDUCT:

A FURTHER STUDY IN NEW TESTAMENT MORALITY

INTRODUCTION.

CHARACTER AND CONDUCT.

IN our previous study, we dealt with the subject of Christian Character. We saw that the true source of character is to be found in Christ, our Teacher, our Example, and our Lord. We traced some of the means by which God trains the character, and develops it toward fulness of virtue and maturity of power. We endeavoured also to exhibit various aspects of the culture of character, as a business which must engage the careful study of all who would live nobly. We have now, looking beyond the study of character in the making, to consider it in action amid the actual circumstances of human life. The *aim* of Christian conduct is determined by the source whence Christian Character arises. The one end of action for a Christian is to vindicate the supremacy of Christ as Teacher, Example, and Lord. He has to apply the moral teaching of Christ to the details of life, as these crowd upon him day by day. He must, therefore, know that

teaching by dint of persevering study, and must acquire skill in its application, by bringing it to bear with unwearied fidelity upon the practical problems of duty as they continually arise for solution. He has to imitate the example of Christ, in all the situations of life in which he finds himself placed. He must, therefore, live in the habitual contemplation of Christ, till the moral excellence of Christ become fixed as the standard of all character, and the mind of Christ become a sure instinct in all action. He has to sanctify Christ as Lord; (1 Peter iii. 15, Revised Version). The lordship of Christ is to be brought forth from the region of mere intellectual apprehension, and is to be translated into obedience. It is to be a fixed principle with the Christian that, since Christ has redeemed him, he owes to Christ a complete obedience, and an unlimited service. It is to be enough for a Christian in any relationship of life, that his Master's will directs him to a certain line of action. This then he is bound by his Master's Cross and Passion to follow to the end, though it lead him to be partaker of his Master's sufferings. He must, therefore, educate mind and conscience to the recognition of the Will of Christ, howsoever and whensoever expressed, and train his will in the practice of immediate, unquestioning surrender. This is the Christian scheme of life. It is open to a man to choose not to be a Christian. If, however, he choose to be a Christian, the type of character he is to strive after, and the line of conduct he is to pursue, are no longer open questions. They are fixed for him by the loyalty he owes to Christ. This will be

the supreme object of his desire, the centre of his resolutions, the burden of his supplication, that he be faithful to the standard unalterably fixed for him in the Person and Work of Christ, Redeemer and Lord.

The *sphere* of Christian conduct is to be understood from what has been said of its aim. Christ is Lord of all; (Acts x. 36). No race or class of men, no department of human activity, no set of circumstances, can lie beyond His jurisdiction.

In all conduct, therefore, Christian character is to manifest itself. A man is to be a Christian wherever he is situated, whatever actions he is called upon to perform. He is to perform as a Christian the ordinary duties of morality, with at least the scrupulous care of those who claim to be moral without being religious, and with a freedom and royal amplitude of conception all his own. He is to act as a Christian in circumstances and situations where a conventional or legal morality would have no commands to give. He is to show, in difficult or unusual positions, that the Christian character draws direction and inspiration from hidden sources of wisdom and power. The Christian type of character is peculiar to no age, nation, rank, disposition or temperament. It is open to all men to aspire after it. It is laid upon all men as their duty to realise it. It is formed in all men who will seek it in its true origin and by its proper discipline. It is plain, therefore, that Christian conduct cannot be reduced to a code, that no exhaustive list of Christian duties or virtues can be given, and that no complete scheme of Christian action can be exhibited. Christian

conduct is necessarily as varied and inexhaustible as the activities of life.

Yet it is possible to observe and distinguish certain relationships, in which men stand, and in which they find spheres of action. In the beginning men are born into families. The *Home*, therefore, is a well-marked and most important field of action. In process of time, they pass the bounds of the family to enter upon the *Work of Life*, and in it they are called upon to act as moral and responsible persons. As they thus mingle in the world, they are brought into manifold *Relations with their Fellowmen*; and in these they necessarily exhibit in a thousand ways the moral type to which they belong. As citizens of *the State*, which governs and protects them, they come under numerous obligations. As members of *the Church*, which nourishes their spiritual life, they have important duties to perform. The design of the following pages is to describe these five spheres of conduct, and to show in outline how in each of them the Christian type of character must manifest itself.

In closing this Introduction, let us note the result which is to be looked for from the Christian conduct of life. That result is twofold. In the first place, the cause of the Kingdom of God is advanced. Let it be well understood that every man who does his duty as a Christian is serving God, and is being used by God to establish His Kingdom and vindicate His Righteousness. Upon this end, the Service of God, the Christian is to bend his energies. No other question need harass his

mind. He does not need to wait till he grasp the whole plan of God. He has got his appointed task to fulfil, and that will absorb all his moral powers. The Christian life is thus marked by transparent simplicity and delightful objectivity. The first thing is obedience. Seek first the Kingdom of God, and His Righteousness. All else will follow in the train of that simple yet heroic endeavour. God sets us in a certain station, and bids us serve Him there. What else may follow lies with Him. The following sentences are not written from a distinctively Christian point of view. Yet they are noble and eloquent, and present vividly this aspect of Christian life and conduct on which we are insisting. "There is nothing better than my station and its duties, nor anything higher or more truly beautiful. It holds and will hold its own against the worship of the 'individual,' whatever form that may take. It is strong against frantic theories and vehement passions, and in the end it triumphs over the fact and can smile at the literature, even of sentimentalism, however fulsome in its impulsive setting out, or sour in its disappointed end. It laughs at its frenzied apotheosis of the yet unsatisfied passion it calls love; and at that embitterment too which has lost its illusions, and yet cannot let them go—with its kindness for the genius too clever in general to do anything in particular, and its adoration of star-gazing virgins with souls above their spheres, whose wish to be something in the world takes the form of wanting to do something with it, and who in the end do badly what they might have done in the beginning

well ; and, worse than all, its cynical contempt for what deserves only pity, sacrifice of a life for work to the best of one's lights, a sacrifice despised not simply because it has failed, but because it is stupid and uninteresting, and altogether unsentimental."*

In the second place, through Christian conduct, the further result is secured that Christian character ripens toward maturity. Character cannot be attained when it is made the sole end in view. The man who says to himself "Go to, let me develop my Christian character," will never reach the end he professes to seek. The end for which the redeemed soul lives is the glory of God. His first all-absorbing business is to do the will of Christ his Lord. His own character is achieved according to the measure in which he does not think of himself, not even of his character, but gives himself up, without reserve, to the duties of simple whole-hearted obedience. Character that is self-conscious in its goodness is to that extent not good. The man who obeys Christ, not because he believes that thereby he will reap advantage to himself, even spiritual advantage, but simply because the love of Christ constrains him, will grow toward a spiritual maturity, the more lovely that it is unconscious. As the Kingdom of God grows through our consecrated service, so shall we grow towards the stature of the perfect man. Our growth in character is dependent on the growth of the great spiritual organism to which we belong, and in whose activities we share. To isolate ourselves from it, and to refrain from its service, in order that we may

* Ethical Studies, by F. H. Bradley.

cultivate our own souls is the surest way to defeat our end. Cultivate the souls of others, by serving them in all the relations of life, and our own shall thrive, and grow in strength and beauty. "I am afraid," said a lady to Mr Wilberforce, "you are so busy about those slaves that you are neglecting your own soul." "True madam," he replied, "I had quite forgotten that I have one." The paradox of Christianity applies to the growth of character. He that saveth his life shall lose it. He that loseth his life shall keep it for results he had not dared to anticipate.

Character and conduct, therefore, have close and subtle inter-relations; and stand towards one another interchangeably as means to each other's excellence.

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CHAPTER I.

THE FAMILY.

THE importance of the family in the moral and spiritual development of the race cannot be overestimated. Here individual character is cradled and nourished. Important as that critical period no doubt is, in which transition is made from the irresponsibility of childhood, to the responsibility and self-consciousness of manhood, we cannot neglect the period which precedes it, or fail to consider how the early home life profoundly affects for weal or woe, the man's after history. Here

disposition gets a bent and bias which it will scarcely afterwards lose. Here habits are formed which become a second nature, and are the very stuff out of which character is made. Here ideas are fixed in the mind, and convictions are rooted in the heart, which will determine the whole subsequent career. Countless instances occur in biography to illustrate the power of home influence, especially as that is concentrated in the person of the mother. The names of Augustine, John Newton, Samuel Johnson, the Wesleys, President Garfield, and many others, will readily be recalled. The commonest observation will supply striking instances of lives which have been shaped and characters which have been moulded by the circumstances and moral atmosphere of the home. A good home is a priceless privilege, and exerts even upon those who have long been strangers to its happiness and virtue an all but irresistible influence. From the far country many a prodigal has been brought back to God by memories of home. A bad home is an unspeakable loss, depriving the unhappy members of it, of that inheritance of joyful, pathetic, and ennobling recollection, which was their birthright.

The family, being thus so profoundly influential in the formation of character, has value for the nation beyond comparison with mere material resources. The vigour and the decay of a people are alike to be traced to the homes out of which men and women pass to the duties of citizenship. This fact must be fully recognised in all political or educational or economic schemes. Theories which tamper with the family as a sacred and

inviolable institution are condemned by this test, and all attempts to realise them are foredoomed to failure. The wealth of the State lies in the character of its citizens; and character depends on the sanctity of the home. Break up the home, under any pretext whatever, and the ruin of the State is inevitable. Romanism, by proclaiming the religious superiority of virginity and celibacy over the married state, has struck a blow at the family, whose disastrous moral consequences the elevation of matrimony into a sacrament has failed to avert. Secularism by declaring that marriage ought to be dissoluble at the will of the parties contracting it, directly attacks the family, and resolves Society into the anarchic elements of individual desire. Social reform must find its starting point, and its continual guide in the family. Even in respect to those children which result from wrecked and ruined homes, the only possible treatment is to gather them into institutions which shall, as closely as possible, resemble natural homes, and to pass them as soon as possible out of such institutions into real homes, where they may receive something of the affection and nurture of children.

The family is, moreover, the nursery not only of the State, but also of the Christian Church. Family religion is the root and spring of all religion. From Christian families, permeated by the Spirit of Christ, the Church draws her most reliable and most useful members. In Christian families, exhibiting the influence of Christ in the domestic life, the Church has found her best witnesses, and most perfect instruments. The power of Christianity was

first seen in its effect on family life. Purifying the relations of the sexes, making close and tender the marriage bond, emancipating women from a bondage none the less degrading because it was decked with luxury, setting a divine seal on the loveliness and innocence of little children, Christianity demonstrated to the pagan world its redemptive power; and this power it exhibits still wherever the Gospel is proclaimed throughout heathen lands. Even in our own land, the family remains unrivalled as an evangelistic agency. A well ordered Christian home, where sobriety, love, and cheerfulness reign, where God is honoured both in sunshine and in sorrow, is a demonstration of the truth of Christianity, which all can understand, and none will gainsay, and forms by its very presence a constant and powerful attraction to Christ. Family life, then, which has such important results for the individual, for Society, and for the Church, must be maintained in its purity, and must be regulated according to the mind of Christ. We proceed, therefore, to consider the various relations within the family, and to note briefly the duties belonging to each of them.

1. HUSBAND AND WIFE.—Marriage is the union of two persons, man and woman, in full and intimate fellowship of the whole nature.

For this union, human nature has been fitted by the constitution it has received from the hand of God; and in it, finds the best conditions under which to grow to its highest moral and spiritual maturity (Gen. i. 27; ii. 24; Matt. xix. 4, 5).

Marriage is, accordingly, essentially monogamic and indissoluble. It is true that polygamy was

permitted under the Mosaic law ; but it is indicated in many ways that this practice comes short of the ideal of marriage. Polygamy is traced to the Cainites (Gen. iv. 19) ; and it is placed under various restrictions tending to lessen the hardships which result from it ; *e.g.*, Lev. xviii. 18 ; Ex. xxi. 10 ; Deut. xxi. 15-17. The marriage relationship is also described with so high an appreciation of its spiritual value, that monogamy is evidently intended to be its sole true form. This appears particularly in the book of Proverbs, which represents specially the human and social side of the religion of Israel, *e.g.*, ii. 16-19; xix. 14; xii. 4; xviii. 22 ; xxxi. 10-30 ; together with such passages as condemn breakers of the marriage vow, to be found in the second, fifth, sixth and seventh chapters. In the New Testament, such practices as had been tolerated by the Mosaic code, fall away, and marriage stands forth as the relation of union between one man and one woman, so unique that its creation *ipso facto* dissolves, for the individuals contracting it, the ties which bind them to the homes they leave (Ephes. v. 31).

It is important to dwell on the high Christian ideal of marriage, as a union which has much more in view than the mere happiness of the individuals entering into it. Very much of the modern attack upon marriage proceeds on the view that it is merely an arrangement under which those feelings, which are comprehended in the passion of love, may be gratified. It follows that, if this be all marriage is intended to do, it need not be maintained beyond the period during which these feelings last. This is actually advanced by some writers upon the subject.

and is supported in the treatment of love and marriage to be found in many novels of the day. Such a relaxation of the marriage bond is fraught with consequences of direst evil. It would impair the moral influences which husbands and wives ought to exert upon one another. It would diminish the sense alike of parental responsibility and filial reverence. The moral education of children would be impossible ; and the welfare, nay, the very existence of society would be imperilled. Let the marriage union be conceived in the highest aspect, as designed to serve nobler ends than gratification of desire, and as being the appointed means for the perfecting of character in the individual and in the race ; and it will be seen that it is indissoluble, save for such sins and crimes as make impossible the spiritual fellowship in which it essentially consists (Matt. xix. 6-9 ; 1 Cor. vii. 15).

Entrance upon a union thus absolutely unique in closeness and sanctity, which is the earthly emblem of the union between Christ and His Church (Ephes. v. 23-27, 29, 30), is thus the gravest step in the individual life and ought not to be taken without the most careful, reverent, and prayerful consideration of all the elements that enter into the case. Habits of speech or behaviour, which tend to form in the mind none but foolish and frivolous ideas in connection with marriage, cannot be too strongly condemned. Many unhappy marriages and much moral evil in society are to be traced to low ideals of the married state and to consequent haste and inconsiderateness in entering upon it. The following are some of the barriers, which, when they are discovered to exist,

ought to prohibit marriage. *The existence of certain forms of physical and mental disease:* It is the plain duty of fathers and mothers to instruct their children upon such points, lest unwittingly a young man or maiden might be led into a union entailing misery to generations yet unborn. *The existence of wide incongruities of age, rank, or creed:* Where such exist, there is a *prima facie* objection to the marriage, which experience largely corroborates. Such unions as those of an aged man with a very young woman, of a person moving in very high, wealthy circles with one of the humbler classes (though the prevalence of culture among all classes will, it is to be hoped, one day extinguish this type of incongruity), of Roman Catholic and Protestant, Christian and Jew, present no reasonable prospect of mutual peace and benefit. *The pressure of prior duty:* Some of the noblest men and women have found themselves led to the celibate life through the claims of aged or infirm persons dependent upon them for comfort or the means of subsistence. Marriage selfishly formed in defiance of such claims must lack much of the blessing of God. *The absence of adequate means:* No man has a right to invite a woman to enter with him into this union, if he has no reasonable prospect of maintenance for more than one. It is to be observed, however, that there is a distinction between prudence and pride. Men, who abstain from marriage in order that they may have more money to spend on the luxuries supposed to belong to their social rank, and women, who refuse marriage because in the home offered them they will have fewer indulgences than they have been accustomed

to, are sinning against Nature and against God. The love which cannot make sacrifices is not worthy of the name. Suppose, however, that such barriers as those mentioned do exist, let it be well understood that this, too, is the will of God. The Divine Mind that shapes our course has thus planned the life; and it shall fail of no noble quality in the case of those who accept the will of God with simple and uncomplaining surrender. Marriage is no doubt the normal condition of life; but it is not the end for which to live. Men and women, whose path is solitary, may so consecrate themselves to ends beyond themselves, that their natures shall grow in all fair and Christlike attributes. Thus the Apostle Paul felt himself constrained to remain unmarried, and for those situated as he was he advised this course (1 Cor. vii. 8). To married and unmarried alike, who live not unto themselves, the same guidance is extended, and the same crown of moral excellence is promised.

Among the conditions which must be present in order to constitute a perfect marriage we note the following. *Mutual love and trust:* There must be such honest affection based on sufficient knowledge as shall enable two persons to commit themselves unreservedly to one another. How it may have arisen, what may be the history of its growth, and how it may at first express itself, are points immensely interesting to the lovers, are the proper theme of poet and novelist, and must ever remain a source of pure delight; but they are in themselves of secondary importance, and do not form the value and strength of love. Love passes beyond the

accidents of face or outward charm, and fixes upon the Soul, the Self, the sacred centre of Personality. To that it yields ; for that it will live and die. Hence love is independent of outward change ; and, when all the charms of youth are gone, it grows to a warmer devotion, and a truer insight into the loveliness of its object. *Harmony of taste, intellectual interest, and moral principle:* Harmony is not identity. There may be wide differences ; but these must be included in a fundamental unity of tone and aim. Different elements contributed by two persons of independent judgment and vigorous faculty will make the share of each in the heritage of marriage more profitable and delightful. Fundamental discord, incapacity of reciprocal interest, will impair the union, and mar its happiness. *Sympathy in the Christian faith:* This is of supreme importance. No marriage ought to be contracted by a Christian where there is not good ground for believing that the other person entering into this covenant is a sharer of the Christian faith and hope. To be unequally yoked in this respect is to live under an intolerable burden (2 Cor. vi. 14). The test must be—Is God the strength of this bond? Does mutual love find its consecration in the love of each to Him? Are both alike prepared to make the Word of God supreme in the ordering of the new home? If marriage be thus entered upon, no code is needed, even supposing it were possible to frame one, to regulate the relations of husband and wife. God himself by his Word and Spirit will give guidance and inspiration. Duties will unfold themselves in the circumstances of life.

The following heads of duty comprehend wide departments of Christian conduct in the married state; and are presented in illustration of the self-legislative nature of Christian love. *Mutual surrender:* In marriage, husband and wife must make to each other a surrender, surpassing any similar act in any other relationship. Yet this does not imply the loss of personality. Rather is it the means towards recovery and enrichment of the personal life. The natural headship of the husband is transfigured, and becomes not a tyranny, but a ministry; and the natural subjection of the wife is relieved from all trace of servility or abjectness. *Mutual loyalty:* Surrender, accordingly, does not provoke disrespect; it rather supplies the motive for tenderest esteem, and careful maintenance of each other's honour. This includes, not only absolute fidelity to the marriage tie in deed and thought, but such manner of speech and behaviour as shall maintain the personal honour both of husband and of wife. Disrespect, discourtesy, rudeness, failure of gentle and chivalrous behaviour, are offences against the ideal of marriage, and will bring their penalty in loss of mutual esteem and affection. *Mutual confidence:* The ideal of marriage is companionship, intimate, unreserved, open-hearted, truthful and transparent. Secrecy and reserve will soon breed jealousy and mistrust. Husbands and wives ought to share one another's interests, and to live in the light of each other's knowledge and sympathy. To be after years of married life still strangers to one another's hearts would be the tragedy of two souls. *Mutual service:* In marriage there can be no strict division of labour, no absolute

separateness of life. Even in procuring the maintenance of the family, there must be coöperation in labour and in thrift. In the nurture and training of the children, there must also be complete mutual sympathy and active help. The husband is to be blamed who casts this task on his wife. Above all in pursuit of the divine life, each is to help the other. There is no greater sin that wife or husband can commit, than to lower the tone of the other's spiritual life. *Mutual forbearance:* Many things arise from day to day which put a strain on married love. In the circumstances of daily life, there will occur accidents, misfortunes, or disasters, which will form a temptation to irritability or anger. Differences of opinion provoke flashes of temper. Errors, faults, trespasses, may be committed, which give gravest annoyance or displeasure. All these things are the discipline of character, and present the opportunity of love's triumph. The cross word, the bitter sentence, the sullen look, the grudging forgiveness, the petty revenge, are love's defeat, and prepare for its ultimate decay (Col. iii. 19). Conquer here by patience, gentleness, kindness; and the marriage tie shall have been made thereby more tender and enduring.

In general, the law of the married life may thus be stated—so live that when the beloved of your soul is taken from you there may be no bitterness of regret, and no cloud upon the prospect of a union beyond the grave, more perfect and more beautiful than that which time and sense make possible.

2. PARENTS AND CHILDREN.—The Christian home is constituted by the presence in it of God,

acknowledged, worshipped, and served as its Head. The home is, accordingly, no mere aggregate of individuals thrown together by chance; nor is it a unity owning no stronger bond than blood. It is a spiritual organism, of which God by His Spirit is the animating principle, a spiritual kingdom over which God presides as Lord and law-giver. All the members of a Christian home are thus in covenant with God. He is supreme over them, and is pledged to the fulfilment of His gracious purpose toward them. They are subject to Him, entirely dependent on Him, and are pledged to love and serve Him. Into this position of privilege and obligation, the children of the home are born, and are, therefore, from birth in covenant relationship to God, and are designated in His Word "holy" (1 Cor. vii. 14).

It follows from this view of the constitution of the home, that it cannot be an end in itself. The maintenance of the home, its enrichment, and the worldly advancement of its members, do not by themselves form the design of a Christian household, and ought not to be the dominant aim of any member of it. Domestic affection or family loyalty, which does not rise beyond this point of view, has missed its aim, and will do harm to those whose interests are its avowed object. Family selfishness is as ugly and disastrous as any other form of selfishness. The family exists for the sake of ends beyond itself, for the production of human character that shall be after the type of Christ, and for the preparation and equipment of human personality for the service of God and man. Out of this, the divine function of

the family, arise the duties of parents and children respectively.

The duty of Christian parents is first of all to present their children to God in Baptism (Acts. ii. 39; 1 Cor. vii. 14). Baptism is the seal of the Covenant, of which the children born to Christian parents are already members. In Baptism, God declares His design of mercy toward the new-born soul. Baptism is, therefore, a continual reminder to the parent of his child's great destiny; and to the child himself, in after days, is a solemn witness to the law of spiritual life under which he lives. In Baptism, God at the same time promises the gift of His Spirit to make this great design effective in the experience of the child. The parent is thus encouraged to believe that in all his labours for the spiritual welfare of the child, he is acting in coöperation with the Spirit of God. The child, also, when definitely and consciously summoned to the act of faith and obedience is stimulated by the assurance conveyed in his baptism that the Spirit of God will not be wanting to "persuade and enable" him to accept Christ, and thus to be the almighty agent in his regeneration. The unbaptised child of Christian parents is in the position of an unacknowledged heir to a crown and kingdom, growing up ignorant of his great future, and deprived of the quickening influence so great a hope is fitted to exert.

The further duty of Christian parents is to train their children, to bring them up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The aim of training is surrender of will to the will of God, and complete harmony with it. To see their children thus yielded

to God and in fellowship with God is the consummation, toward which parents, who realise their duty, labour with many prayers. It is to be observed, however, that the will does not operate, as it were, nakedly, but through and upon the material of temperament and disposition. To influence the will, therefore, there must be careful study of the special elements in the child's constitution. Some children are bold and confident; others, timid and diffident. Some are keen and quick, eager to enquire and ask; others are more sluggish, less intelligent, too indolent to seek for reasons. Some are sensitive, inclined to be morbid; others are of coarser fibre. All these require treatment peculiar to their special disposition. Mistakes are fatal here. Parents must know their children with an intimate acquaintance, based on sympathetic study and observation. The work of training, accordingly, requires closest and most unremitting attention. It is to be pursued from morning to night, and will assume a countless variety of forms. There is no incident so trifling that it does not afford opportunity for further discharge of this duty. There is no action so slight that it does not enter into the making of character, and need not therefore obtain the parent's watchful control.

The process of training, however, while thus infinitely varied, moves between two fixed points. The first of these is Authority. No progress can be made unless the authority of the parent be permanent. It need not be said that this throws an immense responsibility on the parent in the exercise of authority (1 Tim. iii. 4; Ephes. vi. 4;

Col. iii. 21). Tragic mistakes may be made through softness and negligence on the one side, harshness and unreasonableness on the other. The command, however, being conceived according to the parent's highest conception of reason and right in the particular circumstances, must be obeyed. The will of the child must be brought to surrender, and this surrender to authority must become a habit. The child who has never learnt to obey is unfit for the struggle of life. The second is Liberty. Obedience that is never more or higher than compulsory yielding to authority leaves the character still unstable. The parent's work is not complete, till the child, now passing out of childhood, freely and intelligently chooses the good which he has hitherto known as the bare will of the parent, and finds his joy in doing of his own proper motion what once he did by constraint of bare command. Thus through his relations to an earthly parent does the child learn his relation to the heavenly Father, and is prepared to appreciate and exercise "the liberty of the children to God."

The duty of children to their parents is summed up in obedience (Ephes. vi. 1-3; Col. iii. 20). During the period of pupilage, while the sense of independence has not awakened, and the powers of body and mind are undeveloped, this obedience must be absolute and unquestioned. Naturally the children will render it under constraint of love. Those parents must be criminally weak or unwise who fail to secure it. The situation changes, however, with the advance of the child into the period of transition between childhood and full maturity. This period

is marked by peculiar difficulties and dangers. Manhood has come upon the young nature, and has filled it with the intoxication of independence. The youth, who is scarcely yet a man, is absurdly conscious of himself as a personality, and fiercely resents the restraints of authority. Many circumstances in this age of intense subjectivity and individualism tend to make the relations between parents and their elder children who still reside in the home peculiarly delicate and difficult. The children are sometimes better educated than their parents, and do not yet understand that life brings wisdom which the most modern school cannot convey. They frequently earn wages enough to gratify their taste for pleasure, and they forget the obligation imposed upon them by the unselfish labour bestowed upon them by their parents in the years of their helpless dependence. It is to be admitted also that parents are often unwise, and do not understand that methods applicable to the child will be harmful when applied to the young man or maiden. None of these difficulties, however, touch the moral situation. The children of the home are, in respect of duty to their parents, children still, whatever their age. If the child is bound to render obedience absolute and unquestioning, the young man is bound to render the higher service of loyalty. He is bound to support his parents' authority in his own individual example, and by his influence upon the younger members of the family. The surrender of will, which is lovely when made in the unconsciousness of childhood, is fairer still, when made freely under constraint of well understood sense of

duty. The young man, who thus intelligently and by deliberate act of will accepts an authority superior to himself, is learning invaluable lessons in self-discipline, and is preparing himself for the possession and exercise of powers of government. Thus through generations of family life shall wise and noble traditions be maintained. Individual lives shall be honourable and dignified ; and Church and State shall be enriched by generous and patriotic service.

The loyalty of son or daughter will show itself also in the contributions they make out of their earnings to the family support. These have a value altogether out of proportion to the mere amount in money. To the parent they are the dear and welcome token of the child's willingness to make sacrifices for love's sake. To the young man or maiden the surrender of some pleasure or vanity is altogether gain, giving strenuousness to self-denial, nobility to the ideal of life. No young man will suffer in body or mind, because he denies himself expensive amusements, in order to lighten his parents' burden. No girl will lose one atom of beauty or attractiveness, because she denies herself some costly article of adornment. Self-indulgence alone can injure the character, or mar its beauty.

The duties of children to their parents continue, while the parents remain within reach of love's manifestation. Even though the sons and daughters of the home have to seek their livelihood in other cities or distant lands, the family bond remains unaffected by time or space. It is their bounden duty, and it will be their delight and exceeding

great reward, to maintain by all means open to them the link that binds them to the home where their life was cradled and their souls nurtured. Frequent visits, where these are possible, regular correspondence, and continual intercession before the throne of infinite love, keep the spiritual unity of the home intact. So shall death be robbed of its terror, for it shall cast no doubt upon the certainty of reunion.

One sad question cannot be passed over, though it admits only of briefest treatment—what if the parents have failed in their duty, have been wickedly neglectful of their children's true interests, have been, perhaps, openly profane or vicious, dishonest, drunken or unclean? Have the children in this tragic situation no duty to their parents? If the children of such a home come to know God, they will find that they have a duty laid on them, the saddest and holiest ever given to a human soul. All their duty as children remains, but in the strangest way transfigured. Love has lost the element of respect, and is condensed into divinest compassion. Obedience is transformed into witness, rendered even with the pains of martyrdom, on behalf of God and His Holy Law. Loyalty finds its task in hiding a parent's shame, guiding a parent's erring step, and winning a parent's soul. If to a child's humble testimony, and a child's secret prayer, the soul of father or mother be given as a prize, there shall be, on earth, no deeper happiness, and in the presence of the angels, no greater joy.

3. BROTHERS AND SISTERS.—The home is a realm, whose bond is love, whose law is the will

of God. Brothers and sisters, under the presidency of father and mother, are citizens of the kingdom of the home. Their relationship is, therefore, not accidental nor limited to mere physical proximity. It is essentially moral, and binds those who stand in it in a close and lovely fellowship. Their mutual indifference or estrangement is treason to the home of which they are members, and to which they are pledged to be loyal. If brothers and sisters find beyond the circle of the family, more attractive and enduring friendships, or higher and closer spiritual affinity, than they do within it, there must have been some blemish in the domestic life, some failure in parents, or children, or both alike, to realise the ideal of the home. Brothers and sisters should pass out of the home into the wider world true and lasting friends. If this is to be the case, however, their relations within the home must be kept at the highest point of spiritual efficiency. During the period of childhood, the influence of brothers and sisters is necessarily unconscious, and is highest when most unconscious. It is not only, or chiefly, when one member of a family is made consciously the guardian of another, that the highest results are attained. It is rather in the republic of the home, amid the ordinary intercourse of daily life, and the frank equality of work and play, that the highest educative influence is exerted. Children educate one another, without their being aware of it.

As the mind develops, however, and the character matures, the ends thus served instinctively must be intelligently grasped by the members of the family,

and made the conscious aim of action. Brothers and sisters ought, in the first place, to aim at one another's happiness. The home ought to be the brightest spot on earth to those who belong to it, so that they shall turn to it for their purest delight. The daughters of the house find here large scope for the exercise of all that is brightest and most winning in their nature. By womanly wit and gaiety, by the charm of manner, and the strength of affection, and by the indefinable power of personal attraction, they make the home which their brothers inhabit. The young men of the family have also their work to do, and are by no means to come home with no other idea than that of being amused and entertained. They can bring from the sphere of their activities the vivid interests, the larger concerns, and the weightier questions, of the great world which lies beyond the narrow precincts of the home. They can thus redeem family intercourse from the deadly dulness of gossip, the degrading influence of ceaseless acrid discussion of the characters and actions of neighbours and acquaintances, and the soul destroying tendency of frivolous and unprofitable jesting. To belong to a Christian home, warm with human kindness, and bright with intellectual vitality, is to enjoy the privilege of a liberal education.

Brothers and sisters ought, in the second place, to show to one another genuine courtesy. The closeness and familiarity of the relationship is too often made the excuse for indifference, neglect, or positive rudeness, which would receive

speedy punishment in any other social sphere. The home ought to be the training school in manners, inasmuch as manners form part of morality. The young man, who fails in the respect due to his sisters, is losing the sense of the dignity and honour of womanhood. His polite manners in society veil his inward lack of true chivalry. The neglect or rudeness, with which he treats his sister, will be the lot of his wife, not many days after the attentions of courtship have been concluded in marriage. The young woman, who does not care to win and keep the affections of her brother, is not worthy the love and homage of any true man. Her winning ways in society disguise the deep-rooted vanity and selfishness, which forbode heart estrangement and unhappiness in the married life. Courtesy, kindness, and respect, expressed in gentleness of speech, deference in manner, and attentiveness in behaviour, form the bulwark and support of love. Left defenceless in these respects, love will scarce withstand the imperious assault of selfishness. The history of many a disintegrated family may be traced to causes so seeming slight as rudeness of speech and boorishness of demeanour. The humblest home may be the abode of courtesy and kindness, as genuine as ever were found in a palace. Artisans and farm-labourers, shop-girls, and factory hands, may be as true gentlemen, and gentlewomen, as any who adorn the highest ranks of society.

Brothers and sisters owe to one another, finally, duties of mutual service. Brothers owe to sisters the fundamental duty of protection. Their manly strength is to be dedicated to the preservation

of their sisters' safety, dignity, and honour. There are in all ranks of society selfish unprincipled men, who are ready to take advantage of a young girl's ignorance and innocence, and seek her company simply for amusement, reckless of any injury he may do her affections or her character. A brother's guardianship must secure the sister's immunity from all such insolent attack. Beyond this, brothers owe to sisters frank and loving comradeship. The Turk's contempt for woman's intellectual or spiritual capacity is to find no place in a Christian family. It may well be that, even in questions of general interest and in matters of intellectual debate, the brother may have as much to receive from his sister, as ever, in the pride of youthful superiority, he imagined he could impart to her. Sex reigns even in intellect and character. The brother's mental and moral development craves the supplement of woman's wit and insight ; while sisters require the breadth and stedfastness which man's wider outlook, and more intense and varied life, are fitted to supply. Brothers, too, can render to sisters a service of a high and delicate nature. By themselves living nobly and unselfishly, they can present to their sister's view an ideal of true manliness, and show them what is to be loved and honoured in manhood, while, at the same time, they can guide their sisters to a perception of what a high-minded Christian man needs, admires, and looks for in womanhood.

All the delicate questions which emerge in the relationship of the sexes may best be solved in the pure and bright atmosphere of the home.

Fewer women would throw themselves away upon worthless men, if in fellowship with their brothers they had acquired the instinct to discern what is the true worth of manhood. Sisters on their part have a great ministry of love toward their brothers. Sometimes it may be asked in scorn, or a woman might ask in a moment of weariness and despondency—what can one, who is so limited in range of exercise, so fixed in routine of action, do for the wider world of humanity? The answer is—something infinitely valuable, without which the world would be waste, and human life intolerable, which only a true woman can do. The elevation of taste, the refining of manners, the purifying of moral sentiment, the presentation of the ideal of womanhood, gracious, benignant, tender, wise, and holy, so that in the sight of it vileness may be rebuked, and all chaste and reverent emotions be awakened, and the vow of chivalry be taken, in the young man's secret heart,—this is the service sisters may render to brothers in all Christian homes, whether lowly or exalted.

Above all, the sense of the unseen is woman's peculiar gift. To be witness for the unseen is woman's peculiar mission. The peculiarity of man's constitution, coarser in fibre, more blunt in spiritual capacity than a woman's, the conditions of the life he commonly lives, harder and more exposed to gross temptations, make faith difficult to him, and betray him into sensuality and materialism. The women of the home, therefore, are its missionaries. All that the cloud-borne Madonna was to the mediæval worshipper, the sister may be to the

brother, calling him to a higher life, guiding him to purity and godliness. It was a woman who first saw the Risen Christ, and bore to the Church the message of the Resurrection. Even so from a sister's lips and a sister's character may a brother know of the possibility of a new life in Christ, and come himself to make the great discovery. Thus shall the family ranks be closed under the supremacy of the King.

4. MASTER AND SERVANT.—Hired service in a family is an expedient to extend the usefulness of sons and daughters. Domestic service in a Christian home is to take as its type the relation of children to parents, and not at all that of slave to master. The New Testament references (*e.g.*, Ephes. vi. 5-9 ; Col. iii. 22 ; iv. 1 ; Tit. ii. 9-10 ; Philem. ver. 16) necessarily imply the institution of slavery. In Christian homes, however, the servant is a member of the family, with claims upon the affectionate interest of all the other members. The payment of wages by no means alters this moral aspect of the relationship. It may be that, in modern times, through faults on both sides the relations between servants and their employers have become cold and estranged. Enough homes, however, still remain, in which servants are treated as friends, to show what this relationship may be made, how profitable, delightful, and honourable to both parties in it. The heads of the household must be at least as reasonable and considerate, while requiring all due submission, in their dealing with their servants, as with their children. Servants must be as prompt, as cheerful, and as exact in their obedience as well-trained children, and must seek as

older sons or daughters the highest welfare of the household to which they belong. The office of the nurse is peculiarly honourable, and has special opportunities of sacred ministry. The classic instance here is that of Maria Millis, nurse of Lord Shaftesbury in his neglected childhood. It is well known how she loved him with the tenderness and wisdom of a mother, when his own mother so strangely misunderstood her duty, so that, though she died before he was eight years old, she had implanted in him that seed of devotion to God, which bore, in his after career, so great a harvest.

In families, which include in their circle domestic servants, the children of the rich may learn the true spiritual equality of men, may be cured of pride, before it has had time to develop as a disease, and may be sent into the world, destitute of that sense of class which is the anti-Christ of modern society. From well-governed homes, servants may pass to homes of their own with a high conception of family life, and with practical skill in domestic management. Thus both sides in the relationship may be permanently benefited ; and the money payment be transcended in a higher exchange.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORK OF LIFE.

FROM the shelter of the home, men and women pass out into the world to do the work of life. In the vast majority of families, the younger members

must find work to do in order to support themselves in independence. Even when this motive to work is not present, there is a moral constraint binding men and women to enter upon some definite calling in life. It is true that the woman's calling may lie within the home. If it does, let it be well understood that it is a calling wherein work is to be done, and not a position of elegant idleness. There is no room in a healthy community for the "idle rich"; and there is no room in any sound Christian society for the idle young woman, supported by the fruits of the labour of others, serving in earlier life a merely decorative function, and in later life not even that. The special occupations and professions are now, in increasing numbers, open to women; and there is the immense field of specifically philanthropic and Christian enterprise at home and abroad, where the services of women are peculiarly valuable. No young woman, therefore, need be idle. Within the home or beyond it, there is definite work waiting for the heart, brain, and hands of the daughters of every Christian family. Parents ought to train their daughters to the consciousness of a vocation in life, and should develop their daughter's gifts towards some definite line of work. The desultoriness, emptiness, and *ennui*, by which the lives of the daughters of middle class homes are apt to be blighted, will thus be replaced by the brightness and joy, and the physical and moral health, which are the sure reward of concentrated and regulated energy.

Whatever view may be taken of the position of young women, there can be no question of the necessity laid upon every young man to find and follow a special call-

ing in life. The New Testament speaks out clearly upon the shame of idleness, and the moral obligation of work (2 Thess. iii. 10-12 ; 1 Cor. vii. 20 ; Matt. xxv. 15). The compilers of the First Book of Discipline, in their desire to reproduce the essential elements of primitive Christianity, have dwelt on this necessity of work, and have conferred upon the Christian State the authority to enforce it. "This must be carefully provided, that no father of what estate or condition that ever he be, use his children at his own fantasie, especially in their youth-head ; but all must be compelled to bring up their children in learning and vertue. The rich and potent may not be permitted to suffer their children to spend their youth in vain idlenesse, as heretofore they have done. But they must be exhorted, and by the censure of the Kirk compelled to dedicate their sonnes, by training them up in good exercises, to the profite of the Kirk and Commonwealth."

After appointing the time for every course of study, they conclude : "and the rest till the age of twenty-four years, to be spent in the study, wherein the learner would profit the church or commonwealth be it in the lawes, physick, or divinitie, which time of twenty-four years being spent in the Schools, the learner must be removed to serve the church, or commonwealth, unlesse he be found a necessary reader in this same colledge or university."

It is strange to find John Knox so much in sympathy with modern Socialism ; and it is questionable whether the authority of the State ought to be invoked. There can be no question, however, of the authority of God, binding upon every man, who will

live nobly, the duty of serving his generation, to the utmost of the opportunities and talents God has given him. In the work of life, accordingly, we fulfil the intention of the divine dealing with our souls. God placed us in Christian homes, not that we might remain in them enjoying their ease and comfort, not even that we might devote ourselves to their aggrandisement, but that in due time we might leave them, and carry into the world the moral results of our training while we belonged to them. It is not inappropriate or irreverent to refer to our Lord's example, who, though He was loyal as a son to a mother, yet clearly indicated the consciousness of a mission, to which He must devote Himself, and in which He must follow an independent career (*cf.* Luke ii. 49 with John ii. 4).

God called us into His Kingdom, not that we might remain safe as in a paddock, but that we might glorify Him, and extend the bounds of that realm of righteousness, peace, and joy, which came with Christ, and which depends for its progressive victory on the service of the redeemed who are its citizens. God calls us to some definite work, not that we may thereby win our livelihood, or amass a fortune, but that we may render to Him a service, which, in the condescension of His grace He commits to our hands, and which, in His sovereign disposal of the lives of His children, He will receive from no one else.

1. SURVEY OF THE FIELD.—The Christian view of the world is that it is God's, and, therefore, very good. All that He made has a divine use and function: the material universe with its immense

resources upon whose incalculable fulness men are only now entering, and the body and soul and mind of man, more marvellous still in constitution and in power. These He has, further, fitted to one another, so that in the world man finds the sphere of his action, and the instruments of his design, the controlling principle of all his activities being the will of God.

The Christian view, however, recognises the presence of evil in the world, and in man. All that is in the world is, therefore, not fit for human use or enjoyment; and all activities possible to man are not morally permissible. For a being thus placed, accordingly, the work of life must lie within the limits determined by these two ends; it must carry out such designs as are clearly God's intention in the creation of the world and man; and it must repel the assault of evil upon the sphere within which God's will is being done, and extend that sphere over the domain where evil is dominant. Any work which cannot be brought within these limits is not work for a Christian man to do. Within these limits, all work gains the character of a divine service. The mischievous distinction of Sacred and Secular has no place in the Kingdom of God. The work of a man's daily calling must never be allowed to fall out of the sphere of moral interest, or moral judgment. The man is in it the servant of God; his work is sacred as done for God and under the great Taskmaster's eye. It is misleading to limit the honourable distinction of "work of the Lord," to work which is specifically spiritual in its aim.

The lines of George Herbert are often quoted in this connection :

> " All may of Thee partake :
> Nothing can be so mean,
> Which with this tincture (for Thy sake)
> Will not grow bright and clean.
>
> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine,
> Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
> Makes that and the action fine."

Dean Goulbourn, commenting on these verses, adds : " If both a child's education, and a slave's drudgery find their place in the vast system of God's service, what lawful calling can we suppose to be excluded from a place in that system ? " *

So the little silk-winder of Browning's poem sings, finding in lowliest lot a divine appointment, a divine guardianship, and a divine reward :

> " All service ranks the same with God :
> If now, as formerly He trod
> Paradise, His presence fills
> Our earth, each only as God wills
> Can work—God's puppets, best and worst,
> Are we ; there is no last or first."

Taking a bird's eye view of the field of divine service thus open to us, we note the following classes of labour. Of fundamental importance, as that upon which the whole superstructure of Society rests, we have Agriculture. Here man stands next to Nature to receive the manifold gifts, which God

* See " Thoughts on Personal Religion," Part I., ch. iv., and Part III., ch. iii.

has ordained for his varied requirements. Those, accordingly, whose work leads them to the cultivation of the land have a calling, ancient as the life of man on the earth, and peculiarly fitted to lead men to a sense of their dependence upon the power and faithfulness of God, and to develop in them such virtues as patience and hope, moderation in living, and perseverance in toil (Gen. viii. 22; Is. liv. 9, 10; Jas. v. 7). The depopulation of country districts, the destruction of peasant homes, and the drafting of the flower of the rural population into cities is an unmixed evil. The work of the husbandman is honourable for itself, and most beneficial to the commonwealth, not merely as providing the necessaries of life, but as contributing to the body politic a class from which have arisen many most eminent in their abilities, their moral qualities, and their usefulness. Scotland, of all countries, has reason to be proud of its peasantry, and to mourn its threatened extinction. The temptations of the worker upon the land lie in the direction of aversion to intellectual pursuits, and a tendency to grossness of pleasure. The shadow of impurity hangs dark over many of the fairest territories in our land.

Touching hands with Agriculture come the Handicrafts, by which the products of Nature are wrought into shape for the uses of civilised life. Society cannot remain in the pastoral or agricultural stage. The progress of mind and character leads to a new relation to Nature, in which men do not simply follow her lead, but take the initiative, and so act upon the resources they discover within her as to

build up for themselves a more highly organised and more elaborately equipped social life. The artisan and the manufacturer, accordingly, are direct agents in the advance of the race, and aid in increasing, not merely its material wealth, but its store of mental and moral faculty. The humblest artisan has, therefore, a share in the highest intellectual and spiritual gains of society at large, and deserves the respect of those whom his labour enables to live a larger and nobler life than would otherwise be open to them. It is the duty of society to preserve its hand-workers from the dangers which may be incident to their occupation, and to secure that they shall never be regarded as a mere part of the machinery amid which their labour lies. The hand-worker, living as he necessarily does in centres of population, has opportunity of mental development, and of acquaintance with the wide and vivid interests of society, which it will be at his peril if he neglect. His temptation will be to take a low view of the work he does, to look upon his relation to it as temporary and accidental, and to throw himself, when it is over, into the stream of mere self-indulgence. The modern division of labour, confining a man to some narrow round of mechanical actions, and the modern shortening of hours of labour, right and proper though they be, have accentuated the dangers to which hand-workers in our cities are exposed, and make necessary special watchfulness and self-control.

The predominant business of modern Society is Commerce, by which the results of agriculture and the handicrafts are distributed through the world as

necessity arises. The task of Commerce, therefore, is essentially humane and even benevolent ; and in the history of the race Commerce has been a leading factor in subduing savagery, restraining the hostilities of nations, encouraging peaceful arts, raising degraded peoples, and giving them a place in the organism of humanity, and, in general, ameliorating the lot of millions of mankind. Let the merchant magnify his office. It is useful and honourable. The moral qualities, which accompany those aptitudes and faculties which secure success in a commercial career, are intentness and earnestness of mind, breadth of interest in all matters affecting the welfare of society, fixedness of purpose which does not relax till it have gained its end. The merchantman stands in our Lord's teaching as the type of the Kingdom of Heaven ; and the good business man has undergone a mental and moral discipline which ought to make him a noble servant of God. No doubt, Commerce may be degraded, till it become a mere scramble for wealth, in which all remembrance of its higher ends is lost and swallowed up in the fierce selfishness of rivals and enemies. Those engaged in it will then deteriorate in character, as love of gain subdues all the finer impulses of their natures, deadens their consciences, and even narrows and stupefies the higher intellectual faculties. The trader has to struggle against the strong tide of selfishness, and has to lift himself above the delusion which estimates all things in terms of money. He must set the Cross above the Counter, and consider that, even in buying and selling, he that saveth his life shall lose it.

The learned Professions presuppose the work of the special trades and pursuits, which minister to the material wants of man, and build the fabric of material civilisation. They take man in his higher mental and moral constitution, and recognise in him an inherent nobleness, which is worthy of preservation and development. Their interests are thus universal, and are unaffected by local or national distinctions. The results they gain are the direct heritage of mankind. They demand for their due discharge the very highest qualities of mind and heart; and afford a vocation which the brightest and the worthiest may be proud to follow. It is a pity if the modern rush for wealth should divert from pure learning the honourable ambition of the youth of our land. It is a greater pity if it should infect the Professions themselves, and degrade them into mere speculative concerns, where the prize is not discovery of truth, but increase of financial gain.

In entering on one of them, a young man or woman is drawing very close to the God of truth, and is becoming in a distinctive sense His servant in the cause of humanity. The Healing Art is devoted to service of the sick and suffering, and is the most Christ-like calling, save one, which man or woman can follow, constituting, indeed, the point where redemption touches the physical side of man's complex nature. Law is directed to the maintenance of the organic unity of the body politic, welding individual right into the harmony of social well-being, guarding the sanctity of personal life against all assault of selfishness whether

individual or public. The legal calling thus belongs to the mighty working whereby God orders the affairs of His universal Kingdom; for "of Law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both Angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."*

Other professions deal more exclusively with the intellectual nature of man; and in these the finest and most acute minds of either sex may find congenial exercise. Education lays its hand on the mental faculties in the process of their growth, and fits them for service. Literature gives form to the experiences of individuals and of the race, adds to the increment of wisdom, and hands it on to generations yet unborn. Journalism serves a more temporary function, and embodies thoughts which may perish in the moment of utterance; none the less it is indispensable and honourable, as quickening and elevating the daily life of man, and forming the medium through which nations may find their brotherhood. The Pastoral Office connects itself with that aspect of man's constitution in which the image of God is more perfectly to be discerned. It addresses man as free, responsible, immortal. It deals with thoughts, impulses, purposes, which are the springs of action. It follows the subtle lines

* Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," Book I., xvi. 8.

of affection and spiritual affinity by which men are bound to their fellows and to God. It rises beyond the fluctuation of feeling, the opportunism of selfish desire, and witnesses to the claim of eternal right. It descends beneath the depths of failure and sin, and speaks the divine accents of eternal mercy. It is at home with the young and prosperous, encouraging them to behold and follow ends not confined to time or things material. It is more at home with the struggling, the defeated, the weary and the dying, cheering them with promises of a life higher than temporal, a strength more than human, and quickening within them a hope that enters within the veil.

There is no rank which does not need this priestly ministry, no race which does not cry aloud for such benignant remedy. Here is a calling which may well attract to its pursuit the flower of any nation. Alone of all the professions, it invites to its membership men of lowly birth, in the persuasion that community of origin and experience with the common people shall be no hindrance, but rather a help, to the right apprehension of their spiritual necessities. At the same time, it welcomes to its work the best intellectual and moral force any social grade can provide. Time was in Scotland, when the son of the peasant met in the ranks of this profession the son of the merchant prince, or even of the noble. It will be an evil day when this wholly ceases; for thus we have a witness to the primitive democracy of the Christian Church, and a standing protest against the mischievous stiffening of class demarcations. No doubt there are many tempta-

tions besetting the professional callings. In the blunt criticism of public opinion, medicine tends to atheism, law to dishonesty, divinity to falsehood and unreality. These vices are, however, themselves witness to the ideal of excellence set before those who follow these professions. The good we see it is possible to reach; and failure becomes our condemnation. The professional career has the divine sanction; and in it divine service may be done, and the highest type of character be achieved.

Two callings which lie somewhat apart from the ordinary life of society may be more briefly noticed. The work of the soldier is necessary to society constituted as it now is, and may be done by a Christian man. We admit and assert with deepening horror that war is an unspeakable evil, that any Prince or Statesman who hurried his country into war would be a gigantic criminal, and that any nation which, for selfish reasons, declared war against a neighbour, would deserve the heaviest penalty of providence. We assert too that war is always caused by sin or folly. At the same time, there are evils worse than war. The ignoble servitude of a people, the degrading tyranny of a conquering race or dynasty, civil anarchy, or savage turbulence, are evils which in the nature of the case can only be referred for redress to the dread arbitrament of the sword. Any nation which declined to draw the sword on behalf of right or mercy, in order to purchase its own security, would betray a decadence of moral vigour which would surely end in evils worse than bloodshed. The

calling of the soldier is, therefore, an exigency of a world where sin abounds. It has the divine approval. Its duties may be discharged for God. It affords to the individual a splendid discipline in many of the qualities which enter into the noblest manhood. It provides for the nation an object lesson in the highest virtues, and a store of heroic memories, which are the food of valour and virtue for succeeding generations of citizens. In point of fact, a generation which has seen Charles Gordon die at his post in Khartoum, has already an answer to the question, "may a Christian be a soldier?"

The work of the artist bears a yet clearer impress of the divine sanction. In the constitution of man as it has come from the hand of God, there is the faculty of imagination, the sense of the beautiful. To neglect this side of our nature would be sin. Its culture and development require, therefore, a special calling, which may be followed for the welfare of man and the glory of God. The poet, the painter, the sculptor, are all engaged in holding before the eyes of men forms of ideal loveliness, in order that the reality of things lovely may become a conviction and a passion in the heart. It is true that the artist, like the doctor, the lawyer, or the man of letters, may do his work well, without being consciously a servant of God. It may even be true that the artist need not select, as the subject of his idealisation, themes explicitly religious in their immediate reference. None the less is it true, that, in presenting the ideal to man, he is doing the work of God, and will do it the

better for being consciously and avowedly the servant of God. The theatre and the profession of the actor present a different problem. It may be discussed in the interests of art, whether the theatre, with its enormous number of performances and its constant purveying to the instinct of pleasure, is not false to its artistic function. It may even be asked whether the art of dramatic representation is not injured and almost lost through the existence of a class, withdrawn from the ordinary activities of life, and devoted to its pursuit. It might be maintained as a matter of theory that the theatre, properly administered, might serve a great educative function in the community, and that enacting dramas on the stage might be a task capable of being done for Christ. All such questions, however, fall aside, in face of the enormous evils, which attend the administration of theatres in the present day. It may be that we personally enjoy dramatic representations, and even benefit by those which are occasionally rendered; but, when we consider the harm which the theatre undoubtedly works among those who frequent it, and those who act upon the stage, the principles of Christian expediency (1 Cor. x. 23), and of Christian charity (Rom. xiv. 15), forbid our participating in it as a permanent institution, whether as spectators or as actors.

2. **THE CHOICE OF A CALLING.**—In the work of life we are not mere adventurers, striking out a path for ourselves. By redemption we have been made instruments of the divine purpose, which includes our whole career. The term "calling"

is thus to be pressed to its full application. It is proper to speak of ministers getting a call, their "call" coming from God through the mouth of the Christian congregation. With the same propriety may any worker in the world be said to receive a call from God to his particular task.

Ministers are ordained to their work by the direct gift of the Holy Spirit, the outward sign commonly used being the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery.* In quite analogous sense, any worker in the broad field of divine service receives ordination at God's hands, and is endowed, as Bezaleel and Aholiab were, for the special task committed to him. The Call, therefore, comes from God. We dare not go where we are not called. It behoves us, therefore, to be very attentive to the voice of God. It cannot be missed of any who will preserve a loyal heart and an open mind.

God speaks to us *in the circumstances of life.* There is a divinity in common providences, and that determines the ends, and shapes the courses of our lives. In choosing a calling, therefore, every element of the situation must be taken into consideration. Especially the aspect of filial and fraternal duty must be regarded. A young man may find it right to turn aside from a path, which he might otherwise have pursued, if it be barred by a parent's or a sister's need. No blessing can attend selfishness, however successful its career. By watching the incidents of our life, and by setting them in the light of God's word, we shall scarcely

* The sign, however, is not essential to true ordination, and was not employed by the early Scottish Reformers.

fail of hearing the Voice which says "This is the way; walk ye in it." God speaks to us further *in the bent of our individual disposition.* Love of our vocation is essential to its efficient discharge. Parents ought to remember this, and should be on the watch to discern any peculiar taste or capacity in their children, and should be careful to do it justice, and to give it exercise. Great injury may be done by forcing a young man or woman into uncongenial employment. Such injury reaches the level of crime, when a son is thrust into the sacred office of the ministry, simply because it provides a genteel occupation. The inner call must always be present along with outer circumstances, if they, even when seemingly most favourable, are to be regarded as providential.

Love of our vocation is indeed essential to its proper moral discharge, and to all true ethical gain to be derived from it. Work is well done only when done for its own sake. Work is best done, when it is done in God's sight, and for Christ's sake. To work simply for a livelihood, or with no other thought than to amass wealth, is to be a slave. We have made money our master; and to serve any power, save that of God, is to place our souls in bondage. We are free, only when we stand before our work, and view it as a divine service, and do it for love of God and of the work itself. A movement to give the worker higher wages and shorter hours of labour may be most proper, if its end be to provide opportunity for the social and moral progress of the worker. If, however, the motive of the agitation be distaste of work and love of money or ease,

it stands thereby condemned. Many economic problems run up for their solution into the moral sphere. If throughout the workers of our country there be maintained a genuine love of work, an honourable pride in it, and a perception of all its gains, moral as well as material, the standard of efficiency will be well maintained, and we shall as a nation have nothing to fear from the competition of rival races.

God speaks to us above all *in conscience.* The proposed calling must be subjected to the moral test, carefully and honestly employed. What effect is this occupation likely to have upon me? Can I do this work, and preserve my integrity? Does it present temptations against which it is little likely I shall be able to hold out? By devoting myself to it, is it probable I shall lose my susceptibility to spiritual influences, my love for the concerns of the divine life? Is it in itself an occupation not permissible to a Christian, even though it may be permitted by law? Is it, for instance, so largely speculative that it is only a form of gambling, in which gain does not go by merit, and profit is out of all proportion to use? Is it, possibly, a trade by which society is injured, and the characters of those who employ its products are too often destroyed? In a word, Can I do this thing for the glory of God? If not, it is forbidden.

There is one trade which at once arises to the view, as presenting a difficult question, that, *viz.*, in alcohol. Theoretically, we may admit that there is a use of alcohol which is not sinful, and that consequently the making and selling

of it is permissible and right. It may be pointed out that men engaged in it have been conspicuous as philanthropic and religious men ; though it must be remembered that such persons are to be found in the class of brewers and distillers, removed, therefore, from immediate contact with the evils of which the material they make is the agent. Practically, it may be urged that thousands of persons are in the trade, having entered it with no evil motive, and are now living on its proceeds reputable lives. Certainly it would be wrong to pass upon such persons moral condemnation, or to banish them from Christian fellowship and the privileges of the Christian Church. At the same time, the trade is so implicated in the crime and misery of the land, that it is most evident that it cannot be carried on for the glory of God and the good of men ; and that no man who values his peace of conscience and his growth in Christian character, and his advance in the divine life, can enter it, or remain in it. It is not for any man, or any body of men, such as a Temperance Society, or a Church Court, to arrogate the authority of the divine judgment in the case of individuals ; but it is incumbent upon all who love righteousness to bear witness to truth, and bring the searching light of God's word to bear upon the practical and personal question. Thereafter, every soul must bear its own burden.

3. THE ISSUES OF LABOUR.—The work of life being thus viewed as a calling of God, we are enabled to see that it must always be, in the truest sense, successful. Work, done from the highest motive and conscientiously carried out, is always its sure reward.

The moral gains of work were noted in the former series of studies in New Testament morality, as being such as these—humility, perseverance, concentration, sympathy, increased capacity.* We add two notes to be found in the character of him who is, in this high sense of the term, a Christian worker, not often combined in our conception of moral excellence: diligence in business, an intentness of mind and singleness of purpose, which is bent on producing the best possible kind of workmanship; and unworldliness, a detachment of spirit from the whole earthly sphere which is passing away with the lust thereof. The Christian worker ought to be master of his craft, so that no man of the world, whose equal he is in gifts and capacity, shall be able to excel him; and he ought, at the same time, never to be its slave, tied to the chariot wheel of his business or occupation, and dragged along a course of mere money-making. He should be the ablest and most competent workman *in* the world; while also he remains not *of* this world, but of that which is to come, which already he inhabits as a citizen (Phil. iii. 20, Revised Version).

The opposite of this lofty Christian type is the worldly man, who makes the world and its enjoyment his chief end, and who lives in it, as though it were the sum of all that is real, and worthy of a practical man's pursuit. Worldliness is a vice of soul more destructive of the divine life in man than many of the special vices, which the worldly man, who is often highly respectable, condemns in unmeasured terms as being

* "Christian Character" pp. 60-63.

wrong, and, still more, as being indecorous and unprofitable. There is more hope of the drunkard and the harlot, than of the man whose very soul has been corroded by worldliness; "for to be carnally minded is death" (Rom. viii. 6). The combination of these seeming opposites, high efficiency in the world, and noble and unselfish unworldliness is finely expressed in St Paul's favourite vein of paradox (1 Cor. vii. 29-31).

In the highest sense, therefore, success is guaranteed to the man who humbly accepts and loyally follows the calling God has given him; and for his own full satisfaction none other is wanted. At the same time, work has a market value, and its results may be expressed in terms of money. Here, accordingly, two cases present themselves: that in which there is increase of money, and a marked degree of worldly prosperity, and that in which there is loss of money, and a continuance of straitened means, or even the occurrence of serious adversity. Suppose, then, the result of work be a considerable and increasing share of the good things of the earth, what shall be the attitude of the Christian toward his possessions? Here the fundamental New Testament doctrine is that there is no absolute proprietorship on man's part as against God. The work man has done is God's work; its fruit is for God's service. If God has placed wealth in smaller or greater amount in any man's hand, it is a stewardship, a trust held on condition of fulfilling the ends specified by Him who has honoured men by making them His trustees. Our right in God's sight to anything we may possess depends on the

use we make of it. We forfeit our right by abuse or neglect (1 Thess. iv. 11, 12 ; 2 Thess. iii. 10, 12 ; Ephes. iv. 28 ; 1 Pet. iv. 10 ; 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5).

If, then, wealth be a stewardship, it is plainly wrong to despise, or refuse it, or condemn those who possess it. To declare that property in any form or degree is incompatible with the Christian life, and that poverty in the outward and material sense of the term is the ideal life of a Christian, is to declare that the world is not God's, and that it is in itself inconsistent with the divine life, a position which contradicts the truth of Creation, of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and of Redemption. The world is God's ; and life in it may be wholly consecrated to His glory, and wholly permeated by His Spirit. The very fact that our Lord assures us that our temporal welfare occupies a place in God's thought for us, condemns as presumptuous the affected spirituality which would neglect it. St Paul roundly condemns the whole system of pretentious asceticism as mere perversity (Col. ii. 20-23). His own example shows how he duly cared, even in prospect of death, for the claims of his body, and the culture of his mind (2 Tim. iv. 13).

The conception of wealth as a stewardship condemns yet more explicitly and severely the vice of covetousness. Covetousness views the things of the world as constituting the absolute property of their possessor ; and encourages the most tenacious hold of them, and the greediest pursuit of them. Covetousness is in the heart of it a witness at once to the infinitude and to the folly of man. Man being spiritual, having affinity to the divine

nature, and being capable of satisfaction only in fellowship with God, the world at its utmost extent is wholly incommensurate with his dignity and capacity. Hence arise the passion of covetousness, the frenzy with which man seeks ever more proprietorship in the world, hoping thus to satisfy his soul, and secure himself against fate, and the bitter disappointment with which he finds that neither can it respond to the claim he makes upon it, nor can he continue his possession of it. He remains in the midst of it unsatisfied, and in the end he is separated from it. Our gentle Lord sums up the verdict of reason upon the covetous man in these words, which are the more terrible, because they are so brief and cold, "Thou fool!" (Luke xii. 15-21).

Covetousness occurs continually in the warnings of the New Testament as a vice of soul, wholly inconsistent with the relation of the Christian to God as his Father (Ephes. v. 3; Col. iii. 5; Heb. xiii. 5). Wealth, then, is neither to be eschewed as evil, nor greedily grasped as the sole good. It is to be recognised for what it is, and used accordingly. Wealth is a mighty power in the world. It enters as a potent influence into the progress of the Kingdom of God. It is an instrument whereby the glory of God may be advanced in the material and moral progress of communities and of individuals. It is, therefore, not only legitimate, but right to endeavour to add to the wealth of the world, and even to seek it as one of the issues of labour.

The accumulation of wealth in the hands of a Christian will, no doubt, be restrained by the principles which regulate the prosecution of his

business; but it may often happen that the force and uprightness of his character secure success even in the low financial sense, and an accumulation of money takes place in his hands. Then his position becomes one of grave responsibility, demanding high moral qualities, self-control, which shall restrain him from lavish or vain-glorious expenditure, generosity, which shall imitate the philanthropy of God (Tit. iii. 4) and seek the good of humanity, and fidelity, the supreme virtue of stewards (1 Cor. iv. 2), which shall direct him in the conscientious use of every penny with which God has entrusted him. The rich man who thus handles his wealth, shall surely not lose the praise of "the faithful and wise steward." At the same time, it is a position of serious peril. The very nature of accumulated wealth tends to bind the possessor to earth, to make him think more of the seen and temporal than of the unseen and eternal, and to create in him a loveless and hard heart towards his fellows. The only antidote to such a temper of mind is poverty of spirit, to be cultivated by every exercise of soul which empties a man of pride, and casts him as a needy sinner upon the mere mercy of God, and, practically, by the ascetic discipline of life, limiting luxury, and curbing display, with a view to more ample disbursement upon the needs of men. The New Testament, therefore, while never condemning wealth, has many solemn warnings addressed to those who desire it or have it (Matt. vi. 19-21, 24; Mark x. 23, 24; 1 Tim. vi. 17; James v. 1-5).

Suppose, however, that after diligent and conscientious labour, the financial result be meagre,

no more than a bare maintenance, unrelieved by any margin for ease or luxury, often threatening to leave the worker, and those dependent on him, poverty stricken and in want; suppose even that through want of work, or some wide commercial disaster, a Christian be brought into circumstances of extreme penury, what form in such a case shall Christian duty assume? Such cases are by no means rare. Large numbers of our fellow Christians live in material conditions which are hard and unlovely, often painful and distressing. How far such a state of matters within the commonwealth is due to discoverable and removable causes, is to be determined by wise statesmanship, supported by enlightened and Christianised public opinion. Meantime, the utmost sympathy, finding such expression as tender wisdom can devise, is the right of all who find life a severe and unending struggle. The ultimate explanation of poverty is to the Christian the disciplinary love of God; his deepest comfort in the experience of it is repose in the love which can make no mistakes, and shall never fail (Heb. xiii. 5-6); his greatest inspiration, the fellowship of Him whose poverty is the condition of our wealth (2 Cor. viii. 9).

No financial loss can touch those real gains of work to which we have already alluded, or mar the genuine success which all true work achieves. Rather does adversity add elements of yet higher value to the wealth of the soul. The prosperous man, even when virtuous and well-intentioned, will scarcely avoid a certain light-heartedness and obtuseness of sympathy. At the best he is spectator of griefs he never bore. Of higher spiritual quality

is the chastened soul, deep and intelligent in sympathy, meek in spirit, grave, serious, and kind.

In the school of loss such acquirements as these are found: humility, that yields all to God (1 Peter v. 6); patience, that waits unwearied upon God and bears in sweet submission all that he sends (Rom. v. 3; 2 Cor. i. 6; 1 Thess. i. 3); contentment, that remains with undisturbed inner peace amid care and anxiety, and has enough, whatsoever the poverty of its lot may be (Phil. iv. 6, 7, 10-12). The position of poverty is, therefore, one of rare privilege, which it would be infinite pity to miss. The gains of poverty may, through want of faith, be turned into losses far worse than those of money and comfort. A proud angry spirit, instead of humility, an impatient and bitter resentment against circumstances and against man and God, a restless harassed murmuring heart instead of a quiet mind, make the shadows of poverty an intolerable gloom. The antidote is to be found in glad appropriation of Christ, who is in Himself our sufficiency, and with whom God gives us freely all things (Rom. viii. 32). Blessed is he to whom this testimony is borne by the Spirit of God: "I know thy poverty; but thou art rich" (Rev. ii. 9). The prayer of Agur has been much praised (Prov. xxx. 8, 9). It betrays, however, an inadequate conception of the restraining and upholding grace of God. The higher Christian aspiration is to belong so completely to God, that in any circumstances of life we shall possess Him and be possessed by Him, and be freed from all care save that of serving Him.

"Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share
And this Thy grace must give.

* * * * * *

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before;
He that into God's Kingdom comes
Must enter by this door."

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CHAPTER III.

SOCIAL RELATIONS.

As soon as we pass out of the home, and enter into the world to do the work of life, we find ourselves in the company of our fellow-men each busy in this sphere of action. We stand in the midst of a vast and complicated human environment. Every day we are brought into contact with our fellow-men. In speech and behaviour, by our very presence, we make some impression upon them, as they also do upon us. At once the question of our attitude and behaviour toward them rises into intense practical importance. Here our Christian character will most directly and completely manifest itself. By far the largest part of Christian morality concerns itself with our conduct in these varied, intricate, and delicate social relations.

The Christian view of the relationship in which we stand to one another is summed up in the term brotherhood. Christianity declares men to

be brothers in virtue of their common humanity. They are "made of one blood" (Acts xvii. 26).

The assertion of the principle of individuality, so strangely, grotesquely, and tragically made in the epoch of the French Revolution, is included in the Christian doctrine of man. Christianity, however, traces the brotherhood of men to a yet deeper root. It views men as comprehended in the unity of one common need, and one universal mercy (Rom. xi. 32). In the light of the Cross of Christ all distinctions of race or creed, sex or rank, vanish away. There is left only mankind, lost by sin, redeemed by grace, each man linked to every other by the fact of one common redemption. Christianity entered upon a world, seamed and torn with divisions, Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, bond and free, male and female, and proclaimed a spiritual unity in which these were lost, and replaced by the intimate fellowship of one brotherhood (Col. iii. 11 ; Rom. x. 12 ; Acts xv. 9 ; Gal. iii. 28). Selfishness is slow to admit a fact so subversive of its aims ; and nations and individuals are lamentably slow to realise the moral order involved in the faith they profess. The assertion in terms of Creation and Redemption, of the Brotherhood of man, is as necessary now as when Christianity entered on its conflict with heathenism. The law of the relationship thus established is given in the very nature of its constitution. It is formed by love, infinite and divine. Love, therefore, lies as an obligation upon each member of this spiritual organism toward every other. This is the supreme duty, which comprehends all others (Rom. xiii. 8).

If it be enquired how much love, or of what kind and degree, the answer of the New Testament is two-fold. The standard of love is stated as being self-love, and also the love of Christ.

The first of these ideals of love is stated in that summary of the Law which Christ accepted as correct (Luke x. 27, 28), and which he also proclaimed as his own interpretation of man's duty to man (Mark xii. 28-34). It is also compendiously expressed in what is known as the Golden Rule (Matt. vii. 12). It means that we are to be regulated in our relation to others, by the conception which, in the light of what Christ has done for us, we have come to understand as our highest welfare. Nothing lower than this is to be the aim of love's action toward our brethren. The second of these ideals is definitely prescribed by Christ to his disciples (John xiii. 34; xv. 12, 17) and is echoed throughout the New Testament (Ephes. v. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 Peter i. 22; 1 John iii. 23; iv. 20, 21). It is plain that these two are one. The aim of Christ's love to us, and the aim of our own love for ourselves, when we enter intelligently into the purpose of God's grace, are identical. This love, therefore, such love as we have to ourselves, the very love wherewith Christ loved us, is laid on all the redeemed as the debt they owe to their fellow-men.

The result of obedience to this law of love is our own self-realisation. The paradox of the Christian life is that our highest welfare, that which Christ died to secure for us, and which we are enjoined to seek after, can never be gained when it is made a separate object of pursuit. Our own highest

interests are bound up with our fellow-men, and are attained only when they are subordinated to those of our brethren of mankind. Selfishness in things spiritual is an offence against redeeming grace, against our brother's need, and against our own life. Of this implication of one man's welfare with that of his neighbour, even the Old Testament had a glimpse (Prov. xi. 24, 25). In the New Testament it becomes the regulative principle of the relations in which men stand to one another. Our welfare waits on the welfare of others. Neither can we be made perfect without them, nor they without us. We achieve God's highest design for ourselves, when we seek it for others.

The principle of love, quickened into life by the Holy Spirit, becomes the fruitful source of all social virtues. So closely are these clustered together that it becomes impossible in action to separate them, and scarcely possible in studying them to determine their limits. They come into view according to the various aspects in which our fellow-men present themselves to us. It is one branch of the work of the pulpit, to describe them, and present them to the Christian as elements in the likeness of Christ ; and they invite the careful study of all who honestly enter into the everlasting purpose of God, which will not be fulfilled in us, till we are conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29). Here little more can be done than to name the more outstanding, and leave the development of them to special exposition and private meditation. Consider then, our fellow-men under these aspects :—

1. THEIR RIGHTS.—Greek morality had no conception, save in the later Stoic philosophy, of the dignity of man as such. It attributed to the citizen of a free Greek state high dignity and inalienable rights; but to slaves and foreigners it offered no rights and no protection. New Testament morality springs from the profound conception of the absolute worth of the individual man, which is measured by the fact that he is the object of the infinite love of God. The conception of personality, sacred and inviolable, is the gift of Christianity to the moral thought of mankind. The rights of man, therefore, are at once widened, and deepened, and made holy to eyes that have learned to look upon men as sacred, and to hearts that have begun to feel for them the love of God. We see this in the New Testament treatment of virtues which are recognised in the Greek morality, as in that of every community which has emerged out of the confusions of savagery into the orderliness of established law.

(1) *Justice.*—From the merely legal point of view, Justice consists in giving to every man that which is his. In the second table of the Decalogue, the fundamental rights of man are enumerated, his life, his honour, his property, his good name. These are to be held sacred.

Even in the Decalogue a higher than a merely legal view is taken of the fulfilment of these fundamental principles of right; and it is indicated that there is required for true justice or righteousness more than a performance of certain outward actions.

This higher conception is emphasized in the moral teaching of Jesus; and the widening and intensify-

ing of the demands of righteousness is illustrated in His treatment of the duties of the second table in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 21-32). Justice, accordingly, in the New Testament idea of it, is not merely an abstention from depriving our neighbour of what is his, nor even a conceding to him of what law assigns to him. It implies, negatively, that we are never to treat him, or anything that is his, merely as means to our own advantage; and, positively, that we are always to regard his personality, and all that enters into his personal life, as being as sacred as our own persons and possessions are to ourselves, and as much demanding our care to defend and maintain them.

We are thus to be just in all our relations to our fellow-men: just in thought; our view of them will affect our conduct towards them, and must be scrupulously fair and accurate, uninfluenced by favour, unwarped by prejudice: just in word; our expressed estimates of them have always, however little we may intend it, an effect upon their position and welfare, and must be well weighed and studiously correct, the result, not of mere impulse or feeling, but of proved experience: just in action; our dealings with them affect them either advantageously or disadvantageously, and must be so adjusted as never to injure, but always to further their welfare. Justice being thus conceived, the opposition often expressed between justice and generosity is reduced to a vanishing point. It can never be right to be generous at the expense of justice, as when a man gives presents out of what is not properly his; and it can never be just

to stop at limits beyond which a true and wise generosity would dictate to us to go. Love is a debt; and it is only justice to pay our debts. Love is "a debt which they who are ever paying are best contented still to owe."* Justice, accordingly, covers the whole field of action toward our fellow-men. Any failure in the duty of love toward them does them injustice, and leaves us unjust (Rom. xiii. 7, 8).

Justice, while thus the duty of our behaviour towards those with whom we have dealings, is also a cause whose maintenance is laid upon every man as member of the social organism. Unless justice prevail, no man's personality is safe, and society falls back into anarchy. The Christian law of love does not suggest that we should not defend ourselves or others against injustice. On the contrary, it impels us to stand for justice as the condition under which alone human welfare can be advanced. Our Lord's example presents cases, in which He displayed the noblest zeal on behalf of justice, as when He cleansed the Temple, or protested against the iniquity of his trial (John ii. 13-17; Matt. xxvii. 12; Luke xxii. 52, 53, 67, 68; John xviii. 20-23). Justice is not sufficiently safeguarded by courts of law or the State executive. It is committed as a sacred charge to all the citizens, and especially to those who realise the sacredness of human personality, and the urgency of the law of love.

(2) *Truth.*—It is absolutely essential to human welfare that the truth be known. Love, therefore,

* Trench on the Good Samaritan.

comes to the aid of law, and declares truth as well as justice to be part of the debt we owe to our fellow-men. In all our social relations, in business transactions, in ordinary intercourse and the daily contact of man with man, truth is absolutely necessary, and must be scrupulously rendered one to another. Our fellow-men have this absolute claim upon us that we should tell them the truth, and that we should present to them the truth in behaviour, mode of speech and action, and in all the forms of our activity. Falsehood, exaggeration, an unreal or conventional manner, unsound workmanship, sham, shoddy, veneer of every description, are violations of our fellow-men's right to the truth. We are bound never to mislead them in their pursuit of their advantage, always to aid them in understanding fact, and gaining such apprehension of truth and reality as shall be for them a basis of judgment, and guide in action. Truthfulness is an essential note of the redeemed character which has left its bad past behind it and is pressing toward the goal of Christ likeness (Col. iii. 9, 10). It is the element in which those who are members one of another live and act together (Ephes. iv. 25). Falsehood strikes at the root of moral and spiritual life, makes moral growth impossible, excludes from the Kingdom of God, and is the special work of the enemy of mankind (John viii. 44). It brings upon the soul that is corroded by it the final doom of separation of God and everlasting death (1 Tim. i. 10; Rev. xxi. 27). Love, therefore, according to the New Testament, prescribes truth.

The question is often debated—does love ever prescribe falsehood? Many peculiar and distressing cases of conscience have arisen through a supposed conflict between the duties of love and truth. The case of war may be dismissed. It is essentially a subversion of all moral relations; and stratagem and falsehood are among the consequences of the profoundly immoral situation. The case of conventionality and etiquette presents no difficulty to an educated conscience. It is never necessary to be rude. It is always possible to speak the truth in love (Ephes. iv. 15). It is never right to utter or imply a falsehood, either to avoid hurting the feelings of another,* or to create a favourable impression regarding ourselves. We may be thankful that the case of persecution does not now arise with us. Many a soul, at once loving and true, must have been in sore straits when called on to give evidence when the life of a beloved friend was at stake. Yet even here, truth is supreme. The highest welfare of those persecuted for righteousness' sake is not preservation of the body, but the sanctification of the soul; and this would be hindered by falsehood. Better that the beloved suffer or die than be rescued by a lie. Cases in which someone dear to us is exposed to the consequences of wrong-doing, from which a lie told by us would rescue them, may arise, and require clear insight and prompt action. Two studies in literature present different modes of dealing with such a situation. Jeanie Deans will not tell a lie to save her sister's life, but she will

* *Cf.* Incident of Duke of Wellington told in Smiles' "Character," p. 205.

hazard her own in a long and perilous journey to secure her sister's pardon. Desdemona, to save her husband's honour, dies with a lie upon her lips.

Othello. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'Twas I that killed her.
Emilia. O, the more angel she,
And you, the blacker devil.

There can be no doubt, Jeanie Deans was right and Desdemona was wrong. The highest welfare of the person beloved in each case demanded the truth. The truth is the only medium in which a soul can grow.

The most common case of all is that of sickness. Is it permissible to tell a person who cannot possibly recover, that he certainly will, in order that he may hope, and that hope may prolong his life? Is it permissible to give a sick person, who is anxiously asking a question, *e.g.*, as to the health of a friend who is ill, a false answer, lest by telling him the truth he may be injured? A recent writer answers in the affirmative, and maintains that in such cases we owe a higher duty than truth.* I venture to think differently, while allowing the extreme difficulty and pain of the case in question. I cannot think that any outward circumstances, such as bodily sickness, deprive a person of the sanctity of his personality, of which a right to have the truth told is part. Our aim in dealing with the sick is still their highest good, and to that, truth is always essential. It is possible that death might be hastened, but how can we tell that death is not the highest good for the person whom we love?

* Newman Smyth, "Christian Ethics," p. 395.

In any case, it seems to me fair and right in view of the debt of love that the whole situation into which a divine providence has brought the sick person should be made plain to his eyes, or at least that it should in no way be misrepresented to him. What was said in "Christian Character," p. 99, on the education of conscience is in point here. We do not get formulæ from God for every case. But there may be bred within us by His Spirit through use of fit means an instinct of righteousness which will not fail us in cases of perplexity. Duties cannot conflict with rights, nor duties with duties. There is a point of view for every case, whence right may be perceived, and there is an education and inspiration of God for every such time of need to enable us to see it and do it.

(3) *Honour.*—(1 Peter ii. 17). To the Greek morality, a man had a claim to honour, only if he were a Greek, and not a slave or a barbarian. To New Testament morality, a man has a claim to honour because he is a man, made in the image of God, redeemable whatever his degradation of position or character may be. Of the duty of paying honour to humanity we find the highest illustration in the example of Christ. The outcast and the leper, the harlot and the publican, He treated with the most perfect courtesy, paying honour to that in them which He had come to seek and to save. We are, therefore, to measure men by what Christ thought it worth His while to do for them, and by what He is able to make of them. We are to honour humanity in the person of the vilest specimen of the race, and are to see Christ in the most worth-

less for whom He died. Our fellow-men, therefore, have a right to respect as well as to justice and truth. Love is a debt of honour. The respect we are to feel for our fellow-men, must be expressed in our mode of speech and behaviour toward them. Good manners are not a piece of meaningless conventionalism, which a man will show his manliness by neglecting. They enter into the sphere of duty, and form an element of a genuine Christian character. Mrs Hutchinson's characterisation of her husband presents a noble instance of how a Christian gentleman paid love's debt of honour. "I cannot say whether he were more truly magnanimous or less proud ; he never disdained the meanest person, nor flattered the greatest ; he had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest, and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers ; but still so ordering his familiarity, that it never raised them to a contempt, but entertained still at the same time a reverence and love of him." *

Rudeness is a violation of the law of love, an injury to others, which we have no more right to do them than we have to inflict upon them any other wrong whatever. The roots of rudeness are self-love, and self-conceit, lovelessness towards others, and contempt of humanity which is dishonour to God. The inspiration of courtesy is brotherly love (1 Peter iii. 8). Courtesy includes a lovely circle of virtues and graces : kindness, a genuine desire to be of service ; gratitude, a glad recognition of services rendered ; deference to the

* Quoted in Smiles' "Character," p. 236.

character, wishes, and opinions of others ; modesty, a fine reticence upon our individual achievements ; tact, the faculty of saying and doing the right thing at the right moment in the best possible way. The duties of courtesy often prescribe actions apparently trifling ; but they are never in reality trivial. To speak respectfully, to listen quietly, to reply caimly, to do some little service which in some slight way shall relieve another's burden, to open a door for a lady, to take the outside of the pavement for her, to give a cordial greeting to an acquaintance, are small matters, but they enter into the completeness of the Christian character. We do not all belong to the peerage or the landed gentry ; but we all belong to the *gens*, or family of God, and, therefore, all may be in the noblest sense gentlemen, and gentlewomen.

2. THEIR NECESSITIES.—While we thus stand toward one another in a position of relative independence, with rights which it is love's task to hold sacred and maintain inviolate, we are also bound together in the fellowship of reciprocal need.

We depend upon one another in such a complex and intricate manner, that no man, however proud and independent, however rich and increased in goods, can stand aloof from his fellows and say : I have no need of you. Love enters into this fellowship of common need, and constitutes us the ministers of its relief. The duties of love in this aspect of our social relations are summed up in the Scriptural title of Goodness (Gal. v. 22 ; Ephes. v. 9).

In the first place, we are to entertain for our fellow-men a feeling of unaffected and unconstrained kindness. Kindness is distinguished in the New

Testament from Goodness (*e.g.*, in Gal. v. 22) as a power or potency is from an active energetic principle. Kindness is a disposition of heart and mind toward men in their manifold necessities, sorrows, and weaknesses. It is essential to true love (1 Cor. xiii. 4). The character from which it is absent is crude and immature, however strong and virtuous it may otherwise be. As we ripen towards the fulness of Christian life we learn to place an ever-increasing value on kindness, and to seek to cultivate it more and more in ourselves. Censoriousness, readiness to find fault, to put the worst conceivable construction upon men and their actions, acridity and sharpness of speech to and of others, are all offences against the love which is always kind, and must be peculiarly grievous to the spirit of the gentle Saviour. Self-examination which detects only transgressions of law or confesses only general sinfulness, and omits failures in the duty of kindness, is ill-conducted, leads to inadequate repentance, and secures only incomplete restoration and communion with God.

Kindness is in no way tainted with intellectual imbecility. It takes the best possible view of men and things; it enters into the situation which it studies, and estimates it from within, and so pronounces judgment. In so doing it is not false and erring; rather is it wise and right. Kindness is the condition of right judging of others, and right conduct toward them. This is finely expressed in some places of Amiel's Journal: "Charity—goodness—places a voluntary curb on acuteness of perception; it screens and softens the rays of a too vivid insight.

. . . 'Quench not the smoking flax'—to which I add, 'never give unnecessary pain.' The cricket is not the nightingale; why tell him so? Throw yourself into the mind of the cricket—the process is newer and more ingenious; and it is what charity commands. . . . The truest and best judge, then, is Infinite Goodness, and next to it, the regenerated sinner or the saint, the man tried by experience or the sage. Naturally, the touchstone in us becomes finer and truer the better we are."*

In the second place, our kindness of feeling is to issue in Goodness or Beneficence, the active principle of help. Redeemed by love, we become love's agents, ministers, or stewards, dispensing its riches toward all the needy children of men. Our Lord lays this down as the law of His Kingdom, expressly connecting the ministry of love, which He commands us to render to one another, with that which He rendered to us (Matt. xx. 26-28; John xiii. 1-21). In this ministry we are to spend ourselves, and all our endowments and possessions (2 Cor. xii. 15; 1 Cor. xii. 7). The objects of this ministry include all who stand in need of help. It is impossible before undertaking it, to calculate the number of those to whom it may lead us. The universal range of goodness is clearly brought out in the exquisite portraiture of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 25-37). To the question "Who is my neighbour?" our Lord opposes this other "Who was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?" Love defines neighbourhood; neighbourhood, in the merely local sense, does not

* Amiel's Journal, translated by Mrs Humphrey Ward, pp. 257, 281.

determine the range of love's activity. We are neighbours of all who need our help; and all the needy are our neighbours. Wherever need is, there is neighbourhood, and there goodness finds its work awaiting it. Need never ceases. So long as the world retains the disorder which sin has wrought in it, the need of man will exist, and love's labour shall never end; and when sin shall have been eliminated, need, in the forms in which we know it, will indeed pass away, but the inter-dependence of soul on soul cannot cease, and there will be room even in a reconstituted and perfect moral order for love's vocation of service.

The forms, which our ministry will assume, vary with every phase of need. These phases we may classify as :—(1) Physical. Men have a claim upon us for the relief of temporal necessity. Some of Paul's noblest utterances upon the greatness of the gift of God, are to be found when he is pleading for beneficence of this homely sort (2 Cor. ix. 1-15). Every life lost through want of the necessaries of existence is an indictment against our civilisation, in which every citizen in the community must bear his share. This by no means implies that we are to give so-called charity to every beggar on the street. That is a mere escape from the serious business of relieving the need of our brethren. We must bring to this work warm sympathy, earnest study of the problem before us, careful consideration of the special case presented to us; lest by careless flinging away of money we accentuate the evil we profess to remedy. (2)

Moral. There are needs which neither food nor money can meet, which are to be found in their acutest forms in every social grade. Disappointment, loneliness, anxiety, grief of mind, desolation of heart, are elements in the common discipline of life, and loudly, if inarticulately, call for the relief of love. We are "Beggars All" in the matter of human kindness and sympathy. For this end, has God comforted us in our tribulation, that we might be exponents of His tenderness, witnesses to His faithfulness, and distributors of His comfort (2 Cor. i. 4). It is a foolish blindness which sees in men only a body, so that if it be warmed and fed, there is no more that we can do. The personality of the man, of which the body is but the vestment, oftentimes shivers in nakedness, and craves the stimulus of food. It belongs to the task and to the capacity of goodness, to minister to such needs as these. Even a mind diseased is susceptible of love's remedies. (3) Spiritual. Beyond all else, there is a need and hunger of the soul, which Christ alone can meet and satisfy. Lives which seem full, are empty without His indwelling. Lives which, being empty in the visible sense, are also "without Christ," are poor indeed. We are thus under obligation to make Christ known to all who are ignorant of the Gospel. This obligation can be repudiated only by those who deny that man has spiritual needs, and assert that salvation is not so necessary as food and clothing. To admit that the Gospel is necessary for all, and to refuse the obligation of communicating it to all, is a logical absurdity, and a grave moral fault. This obligation is binding

upon all whose own need has thus been met, and can be fully discharged only by individual action (Matt. x. 8).

The relation between benefactor and beneficiary, between those who dispense and those who receive kindness, is peculiarly delicate, and calls for watchfulness on both sides. The giver must respect the personality of him whose need he seeks to relieve. Need does not deprive a man of the right to have his honour maintained, and his dignity as a man preserved. Hence all giving must be accompanied with the least possible display (Rom. xii. 8), and with the least possible obtrusion of the giver's benevolence (Matt. vi. 1-4). The giver must keep ever before him the highest conception of the welfare of him whom he seeks to benefit. Any assistance, financial or otherwise, which would leave the recipient less strong in character, less fit for the work of life, is obviously not a benefit, but an injury. The task of love is not to live the life of others for them, but to enable them to live it worthily, not to make them less than men, but to increase in them the stock of manly excellence. At the same time, the giver must not be staggered or limited in his beneficence by the unworthiness of the recipient. If the need be genuine, it is the duty of love to relieve it. The use, which the recipient makes of the bounty, is his responsibility, not the giver's; (Matt. v. 45). Fundamentally, it is love we owe to our needy brother. Mere things or outward actions do not pay the debt of love. Love must take up the things of our possessions, and the activities

of which we are capable, and use them as channels, whereby to pour itself into the hearts which nothing but love can satisfy.

The duty of the recipient is to respond to the love that flows through these channels. The relation between giver and receiver is sacred, and may be most blessed on both sides. The giver has the greater happiness, since it is more blessed to give than to receive. The receiver does not grudge him this, however, recognising the love which has prompted the gift, and honouring it as a rill from the infinite fountain of the divine love. He responds to the love, which he receives, with answering love; and where love is the link in the relationship, he who gives is kept from pride, and he who receives is delivered from bondage. To bestow gifts without love is intolerable tyranny. To receive the gifts of love, without loving in return, is not to vindicate the dignity of independence, but to betray baseness of nature, alike unworthy and incapable of love.

3. THEIR OFFENCES.—The duties we have hitherto mentioned belong to the natural relations of men, and may be studied apart from the question of sin. We have now to look upon our social relations as they have been directly affected by moral evil.

Sin, which is the assertion of self against God, has entered into human society, and broken up its natural bond, setting man against man in the rivalry of conflicting interests. Redemption, which is the reconciliation of man to God, enters into society as a healing influence, to restore its lost unity, and to bind men together in mutual love. The constraint

of redeeming love, operating as a moral force within those who have admitted it into their lives, forbids us to meet the pride of men with a yet more haughty self-assertion, or to take vengeance for their injuries with relentless infliction of penalty. It enjoins upon us an attitude, new and unheard of in the morality of nations, and gives rise to a series of rare and lovely virtues, whose beauty was undreamt of, till the message of redemption was proclaimed to sinners. The originality of New Testament morality is nowhere more conspicuous than in its treatment of the offences of our brethren. Sometimes it has even to invent a new terminology, and often it has to distinguish current phrases with a new meaning. In this department of the moral life, Christian conduct finds its most difficult task, and Christian character reaches its divinest excellence. Among the outstanding virtues of this sphere, we mention five.

1. *Humility* (Ephes. iv. 2; Col. iii. 12; 1 Peter v. 5; Acts xx. 19; Matt. xi. 29).* Sin intoxicates with the false sense of independence and self-sufficiency. An experience of God's grace in redemption reveals to man his true position, as one who has forfeited all claim of right, and is dependent for every good thing on the mere mercy of God. It is impossible for one who lives in the consciousness of redemption to think more highly of himself than he ought to think (Rom. xii. 3). He knows that he

* In all these and in subsequent references, use should be made of the Revised Version. Young's Analytical Concordance will be found most helpful to those who do not read Greek, in distinguishing the precise language of the original.

had no standing of his own before God, and that he has nothing which he has not received. Self, accordingly, is wholly set aside as an object of worship, to be served at the expense of the interests of others. The place of self is taken by Christ, and by those with whom Christ identifies Himself. Practically, therefore, humility consists in self-abnegation, and the substitution of our fellow-men for ourselves in our esteem and regard. Humility, however, is not to be regarded as anything pale, unreal, or unmanly. It is not a weakness of character, an ignoble self-depreciation, a perpetual undervaluing of our own capacities. In fact, such ostentatious humility is a subtle and peculiarly offensive pride. Humility, which places self last, is combined with a clear perception of the value of the individual personality, which was so precious that God found it, depraved and degraded though it was, worth the price of blood, even the blood of Christ.

These two, sense of infinite worth, and sense of infinite unworthiness, are combined in the Christian virtue of humility. It is not diffidence, which will decline active service, from a morbid feeling of unfitness, or a sensitive shrinking from being seen. In fact, shyness is simply self-consciousness ; and many refusals to render service to others, made in name of modesty, are simply the result of overweening pride. Humility, because it has forgotten self, is consistent with the highest energy, the most conspicuous courage, and the most strenuous activity. It places the interests of others, and the wider causes of God and of humanity, first, as the supreme objects of pursuit, and subordinates to them all the

interests of self. It is thus of the essence of all good work, and all high achievement. Wherever self enters, the work is to that extent spoiled. Its results may bulk large in the eyes of men, and the doer of it may be exalted in their esteem. But these results are not so great in character, or so fine in quality, as they would have been, had humility entered into the energy which achieved them; and we cannot doubt that he, whose diligence and ability secured them, ranks lower in the estimation of God, than many a worker, whose results are less visible to the eyes of men.

Humility is the antidote to envy. The successes of others, their temporal prosperity advancing above ours, or their growth in moral attainment and in Christian experience outstripping ours, present provocations to the jealous resentment of self-love. By maintaining humility in constant efficiency, we are able to look upon the successes of our fellows with even a purer joy than we look upon our own. Life ceases to be a competition, in which the gain of one is the loss of another; it becomes at once a discipline and a ministry, in which the gain of one depends upon the gain of all, and the joy of one is the joy of all. Rejoicing in the joy of others is not an imitation joy, a cold reflection of joy in our own possessions and attainments; it is the highest and purest type of joy, the mother of our own most real delight. Humility thus keeps us in peace. All those sources of disquietude, which arise from rivalry with others, and produce within us no noble emulation to be their fellows in valour or self-denial, but a base desire that they might be

no better or greater than ourselves, have been cut off; and we are free to follow the path of virtue with diligence and joy. Humility will redeem what the world calls failure, and make it the opportunity of true moral victory. Humility will add beauty to strength, and confer a grace upon prosperity, it were bare and poor without.

(2) *Meekness*; *cf.* in addition to passages referred to above, where it is combined with humility, 2 Cor. x. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 11; Titus iii. 2. Meekness is conjoined with humility, and springs out of it. It presupposes the conviction of personal unworthiness and dependence on grace, which is expressed in humility. Humility implies a true estimate of self in comparison with others. Meekness describes the demeanour which lowliness assumes in relation to their arrogant or injurious behaviour. Meekness leaves room for pity in view of the offensive conduct of our fellow-men toward us. Their conduct strikes upon our heart, but finds there a self crucified and mortified, and so put beyond the reach of evil temper and violent resentment. We are free, therefore, to look upon them with the serene truthfulness, the mild compassion, and the benignant love of a mind kept in perfect peace. Angry retaliation is submerged in the harmony of a soul, from which the disturbing influence of a restless and clamorous pride has been removed. The offensiveness of proud and angry men wastes itself upon the peace which meekness breathes through the spirit, and finds no excuse in the gentleness of speech and manner, in which the quiet heart finds utterance.

Meekness, like humility, is not a mere passivity of the soul, but requires for its maintenance most strenuous energy. It is far removed from cowardice; demanding indeed a high and rare type of courage. It is wholly distinct from apathy or indifference; being always combined with deep insight into the sinfulness of wrong and violence, and a keen sense of personal pain in suffering from them. It is not a mere veil of want of force of character; being the reserve and self-restraint of a richly-endowed personality well aware of its gifts and capacities. By meekness the earth is inherited (Matt. v. 5). It is looked upon, not as a prize to be contended for, but as a gift to be enjoyed; and so it is truly possessed, not by the self-seeking, even if they have made themselves lords of wide acres, but by the meek, who have conquered the love of self, even if they call no foot of earth their own. By meekness the earth is won for Christ. The rampant pride of men is subdued, not by violence smiting down violence, but by meekness enduring the contradiction of sinners.

Meekness and humility are combined by Jesus in his own consciousness of Himself (Matt. xi. 29) as Son of Man, giver of rest to all whose burdens He Himself has borne. They shine forth in His whole ministry of love. He strove not, nor cried, neither was His voice heard in the street. He broke not the bruised reed, neither did He quench the smoking flax. He was courteous and gentle to those whom men deemed it safe or even right to despise. He handled the souls He came to save with the most exquisite delicacy. He never allowed

His strength or power or holiness to lessen the tenderness of His dealing. In face of malignant hostility and persistent wickedness, He maintained a stedfast peace. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. When He suffered, He threatened not. The source of His calmness and meekness lay deep in God, to whom as the righteous Judge, He trustfully committed Himself. Even those like Pilate and Herod, whose character and behaviour deprived them of the right of explanatory answer, He did not scornfully denounce, but maintained toward them a silence, which was itself the most solemn rebuke. In this profound meekness of spirit, He did His redemptive work. He went as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. Our irritability and evil temper fall back condemned in presence of Him who was meek and lowly in heart.

(3) Moderation, gentleness, or forbearance (2 Cor. x. 1 ; Phil. iv. 5 ; Titus iii. 2 ; 1 Tim. iii. 3). This virtue is closely allied to meekness, and differs from it chiefly as attaching to the outward action, while meekness as an inner temper of mind belongs to the character as a whole.

It is the opposite of the spirit of self-seeking, which is always asserting the utmost of its legal rights, and is clamorously contentious when these are in the slightest degree impugned or infringed. It is well aware that a legal right may be so exacted as to be a moral wrong. It interprets law from the standpoint of love ; and often yields the letter, in order to conserve the spirit. In business relations, in

official intercourse, in all positions, where right conflicts with right, this virtue finds its field of exercise. It is strange that men, who in the domestic circle, or the freedom of friendly society, are loving, gentle, and generous, should often, in matters of business or law, be hard, exacting, and relentless; and it is stranger and sadder still, that men will be restrained by self-interest from violence of speech or behaviour, who, when this motive is absent, display all their native pride and selfishness. They will be suave and polite over the counter, and will bear utmost provocation from a customer, while on some public board, or in a church court, they will exact the utmost tittle of their rights, and fiercely resent even a hint of fancied injury. All such stickling for rights ill beseems those who have been so generously dealt with by God. He knows the frailty of our frame; He remembers that we are dust. He makes large allowance for our ignorance and weakness. He bears utmost provocations, suffers constant infractions of His just claim, and does not exact His dues save by the inner compulsion of His Spirit. Even so our Lord tolerated injury, and would not employ the forces at His disposal to repel it. This note of the divine character may, therefore, well be repeated in those who daily experience its graciousness.

(4) Patience, (Rom. ii. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 6; Col. i. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 2; Heb. vi. 12; James v. 7, 8, 10). Here we have the loveliest bloom and highest fruition of that Christlike temper which we have been tracing through the varied and cognate forms of humility, meekness, and moderation

Suppose that the untowardness and selfishness of our fellow-men have been expressed in a series of unfriendly acts, some of which may even reach a height of malignant insult and injury; suppose that we have been enabled to keep ourselves humble, to preserve meekness of mind and demeanour, and have studiously avoided all aggression or retaliation; what remains still to be done or endured in view of obstinately maintained hostility and attack? The answer is to carry out the line of action we have hitherto pursued to its climax in patience and long-suffering. Love suffereth long and is kind. Love endureth all things. Patience under the assaults of men has its root in patience under the discipline of life; and these two are distinguished in the New Testament by different names, though these can scarcely be rendered in English. Those who know God accept all that He sends in deepest submission, in most lowly trust, and wait upon Him with uncomplaining and even joyful patience (Luke xxi. 19; Rom. v. 3; 2 Cor. vi. 4; James i. 3; 2 Peter i. 6; Rev. i. 9).

In Col. i. 11 "patience" refers to our attitude toward God and His providence; "long-suffering" denotes our attitude towards men and their hostility. Enabled to assume this attitude toward God, and kept in it by His Spirit, we are then enabled to turn toward our fellow-men, and endure the pressure and pain of their enmity, with trust in the wisdom and love which has permitted it, with deep compassion for those guilty of it, and with long quiet endurance even of its worst manifestations. Patience in the sense of enduring discipline cannot of course be

ascribed to God; but patience in the sense of long-suffering is His peculiar quality. He has displayed it towards us with a persistency which astonishes and humbles those who have been acquainted with it. It is thus laid upon us as an obligation to reproduce it in our behaviour towards those who grieve us. Patience absolutely prohibits all exhibitions of evil temper (Ephes. iv. 31). It is not the moral weakness of a man too cold to feel injury, too indifferent, or too easy, to resent it. It is the strength of a man whose heart is garrisoned by the peace of God, who, therefore, holds his passions by the throat, and will not suffer them to speak in word or act.

Patience thus preserves the soul from the injury, which an evil temper would work within it. Self, indulged in its resentment, permitted to have vent in irritability, in violence, or sullenness, most surely works havoc in the character, depriving it of real efficiency, and hindering its development into the likeness of Christ. Evil temper will destroy the fruits even of devoted and unselfish service, and will undermine the influence even of noble and generous characters. Patience is, therefore, a necessity of self-preservation, as well as a virtue of our relations with our fellow-men. It is, accordingly, to be carefully cultivated, through personal realisation of the long-suffering of God, and personal communion with Christ, its perfect exemplar and type. Patience, finally, is the condition of our victory over the world, the power by which we extend over it the kingdom of the Crucified. In patience He founded His kingdom; by patience

His servants advance His cause. Hence it is that the contradictions, assaults, and persecutions of proud and wicked men are permitted to try the servants of God, that they may be exercised in patience, and grow strong in forbearance and long-suffering. The Church is mightiest, when under the Cross. Its heaven-sent signal of victory is this: *In hoc signo vince.*

(5) Forgiveness. This virtue of our social relations occupies a large space in the moral teaching of Jesus (Matt. v. 43-48; vi. 14, 15; xviii. 21-35; Mark xi. 25, 26; Luke xvii. 3, 4), and is echoed throughout the New Testament (Ephes. iv. 32; Col. iii. 13). Forgiveness, as Christ taught it, was a new discovery in the sphere of morals, rising high above any approaches that had been made to it, whether in Greece or in Israel. Its ground lies in the fact that we have been forgiven. We have been forgiven; our sins have been visited, not with judgment, but with mercy. This fundamental fact of our experience radically changes our relation to our fellow-men. We no longer stand apart from them in the independence of self-righteousness, which claims homage and is permitted to exact penalty. We are united to them in the community of need and of grace. The love that has reached us is for them; and we are to be the channels of its distribution. To stand stiffly upon our rights, to pose as sovereigns whose territory has been invaded, and to proceed to retaliation and revenge, is to sin against the love which found us aliens and rebels and made us fellow-citizens with the saints, members of the household of God.

Where redemption is not known, there cannot be forgiveness in the Christian sense. The forgiveness of the Greek proceeded from love of moral ease, and the sense that it was beneath his dignity to prosecute revenge. The forgiveness of the Christian proceeds from a sense of the infinite obligation of redeeming love. It is, consequently, no languid indifference, but a consuming zeal of pity, and manifests itself, not in mere abstraction from revenge, but in positive love and yearning over the offender.

In forgiveness the sense of injury to ourselves is lost in perception of the injury the offender has done himself, and in desire to save him from its consequences. For a Christian, whose standing before God is due to grace, to revert in his dealing with his fellow-men to the standpoint of law is deep inconsistency, and exposes him to severe condemnation. Shakespeare has seized this thought in his drama of *Measure for Measure*, and has given it undying expression :

> " Why all the souls that were, were forfeit once ;
> And He that might the vantage best have took,
> Found out the remedy : How would you be,
> If He which is the top of judgment should
> But judge you as you are ? O think on that ;
> And mercy then will breathe within your lips
> Like man new made."

Since this is the ground of forgiveness, its extent becomes at once apparent. If forgiveness were a mere foregoing of the right of revenge, the question, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" would be in point. It would be

reasonable to ask how often we should forego this legal right; and a moral teacher would be required to specify the limits. If, however, we are raised altogether above the sphere of law, if forgiveness is not negative, the foregoing of right, but positive, the manifestation of love, the question becomes meaningless. No numerical limit can exist to the exercise of redeeming love. Hence our Lord's answer takes us beyond all numerical calculations: "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven." There may be offences so deadly that forgiveness is to the human imagination inconceivable; but there is no offence which our fellow-man may commit against us which ought not to be forgiven. We must be careful, however, in such cases to secure that our forgiveness is genuine, not produced by mere inability to take revenge, or fear of the consequences of doing so, but rising out of a due sense of the infinite nature of our own trespass against God, and the infinite love that has forgiven us.

The ground of forgiveness regulates also our treatment of the offender. Forgiveness must be prior to all our dealing with him. Dealing, which does not issue from accomplished forgiveness of the offender, cannot be expected to lead up to his repentance and amendment. Two cases here present themselves; the case of the offender being penitent, and that of his being impenitent. The first case is plain and presents no difficulty which may not be overcome through the power that comes from personal sense of forgiveness. We are to forgive from the heart; without reservations, not silently

setting conditions of a certain quantity and degree of humiliation on the part of the offender; without hesitation or reluctance, not prescribing a period of probation, and grudgingly doling out fragments of graciousness; without remembrance of the offence, not in form granting forgiveness, while in reality refusing it, by withholding the love which is its motive and its strength.

The second case often presents peculiar difficulties which require the utmost sagacity to cope with. The presupposition must always be forgiveness. Forgiveness must precede confession. The impenitence of the offender does not relieve us of the duty of forgiving him, but it gives to the treatment of the offender a special direction. The first principle in our treatment of the impenitent, must be a frank disclosure to him of the nature of his offence. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." We are not to pass over his offence, and behave to him as though he had not committed it. That would be to leave him in his sin, unconvinced and hardened. We are to go to him in love, having forgiven him already from the heart, cherishing no ill-feeling, having quenched all anger and resentment, eager to win his soul; and in the privacy of some well-chosen hour we are to tell him of the fault which has made a breach between us and him, and between him and God. Our Lord in laying down this principle implies that success would in the majority of cases follow its honest application. Even in instances where the presumption is that such dealing would be fruitless, we are still to

employ it, not perfunctorily or despairingly, but earnestly and hopefully. Not till we have employed it, ought we to take any other step, or appeal to any other authority to use its constraint with the offender.

Whatever effect this treatment may have upon him, even if it leave him still angry and hostile, the duty of forgiveness remains in its integrity. Forbidden for ever, is any revengeful action, which has no other aim than the gratification of our injured feelings (Rom. xii. 19).

The virtues we have been considering under this head are sometimes designated by the epithet passive. We have noted, however, that this passivity is not weakness, but power, and that the characters in which these virtues are present are the strongest and most influential. This, indeed, is matter of common observation. "Have you never observed the immense power exerted by many Christian men and women whose lives are passed in comparative silence? You know not how it is, they seem to be really doing little, and yet they are felt by thousands. And the secret of this wonder is that they know how to suffer well—they are in the patience of Jesus. They will not resent evil, or think evil. They are not easily provoked. They are content with their lot, though it be a lot of poverty and affliction. They will not be enemies of others. When they are wronged they remember Christ and forgive, when opposed and thwarted, they endure and wait. They live in an element of composure and sweetness, and cannot be irritated and fretted by men, because they are so much with God, and

so ready to bear the Cross of His Son, that human wrongs and judgments have little power to unsettle or disturb them. Now before these a continual flood of influence will be continually rolling. Their gentleness is stronger than the onsets and assaults of other men. They are in the Kingdom of Jesus reigning with Him, because they are with Him in His patience."*

The social relations, which we have been considering, are universal and necessary in human life, and the virtues which belong to them must be elements in all Christian character. There are relations, however, which are not determined for us by the necessary circumstances of our lives, but are made for ourselves by our own free choice. Even in reference to these, however, we are not left to our own caprice either in their formation or their maintenance. (1) In the first place, accordingly, we are bound to enter into friendly intercourse with the persons among whom our lot is cast. The lovelessness and selfishness which exclude our neighbours from a share in our affections, and leave them always beyond the circle of our intimate fellowship, is an offence against the spirit of love. Even the claims of family love and the satisfying nature of domestic happiness do not justify such exclusiveness and reserve. The duty of hospitality is frequently inculcated in the New Testament (Heb. xiii. 2; Rom. xii. 13; 1 Peter 4, 9). It is true that, in the circumstances of the early church, there were more obviously urgent reasons

* Bushnell on "The Efficiency of the Passive Virtues" in the vol. of sermons entitled "The New Life."

for the exercise of this grace than there can be in modern society. Christians, whose journey brought them to a strange city, had immediate claim on the protection of their fellow Christians. Even this aspect of the duty, however, has not wholly disappeared. Especially in our large cities there are great numbers of persons who are strangers, and have a claim on the hospitality of Christian people. A great field of Christian service opens here. Multitudes of young men and women are living lonely in lodgings, exposed to the temptations of city life, who urgently need the consolation and help of a Christian home. Their salvation may depend on their being made welcome to the joys of some pure and bright family circle. It is to be admitted also that much of the so-called hospitality practised in society is unreal, dictated not by love, but by business expediency, and the instinct of self-interest, and takes forms that are ostentatious and frivolous. This does not excuse Christians, however, from withdrawing from the society of their fellow-men. It is still incumbent upon them to widen the bounds of their acquaintance beyond the limit of kindred, and make their homes the centre of widely spreading kindness.

(2) In the second place, we are bound, if God give us opportunity, to enter into close personal friendship with certain of our fellows. It is possible that our lives may be so ordered that we must be almost entirely alone, cut off from the fellowship of kindred souls. In ordinary circumstances, however, we are placed in such close relations to others that, if we have a loving heart and a discerning

spirit, we may distinguish those, between whom and us there is such sympathy as may deepen into strong enduring friendship. Friendship is the glory of the pre-Christian morality. David and Jonathan in Hebrew story, Damon and Pythias in Greek history, stand as types of this most lovely relationship. It is sometimes pointed out with regret, that New Testament morality has little to say of friendship. It is true that it was reserved for a heathen moralist to compose a treatise *De Amicitia.* But it is not true that the New Testament is silent upon the subject. It presents, indeed, the most perfect type of a friend the world has ever seen. In our Lord, we have one who was the Friend of sinners, not merely in the vague sense of a general beneficence, but in the particular and private sense which belongs to genuine friendship. Beyond this friendship, which still subsists between Him and each soul that trusts Him, there was in His earthly life a friendship between Him and particular individuals among the whole number of those who followed Him. This was characterised by all the sincerity and private intimacy which belongs to true human friendship (Matt. x. 2-4 ; Mark v. 37 ; Luke x. 38-42 ; xii. 4 ; John xi. 3, 36 ; xiii. 23 ; xv. 13-15 ; xix. 27). In the circle of the Twelve, there were those who had been friends before they knew Christ, whose friendship now took a deeper and more tender life (John i. 35-51). Paul is remarkable for the circle of his friends who understood him and loved him, upon whom he poured the wealth of his ardent and loving nature. The Christian ages have been

glorified by the purest and most exalted friendships; and modern English literature has contributed a deathless eulogy of friendship in Tennyson's great poem *In Memoriam*, which celebrates the poet's friend Arthur Hallam. Friendship depends on sympathy of nature, an affinity, mystic, wonderful, not to be defined, which yet lives and is mighty from soul to soul. Hence it is that friendship is the truer and more powerful the deeper the sympathy, and the higher the ideal in pursuit of which the friends find themselves at one. "Affinity of nature founded on worship of the same ideal, and perfect in proportion to perfectness of soul, is the only affinity which is worth anything."*

There arises from this the one great practical regulation for the choice of friends—never choose as your friend one between whom and yourself there cannot be full accord upon the highest concerns of the spiritual life. If your friendship has been formed before your perception of the claims of Christ was clear, and before your decision was formed, the first duty of your Christian calling, and the first duty of your friendship, is to let your friend know the light that has come to you. If he respond, well; you have gained your friend. If not, your friendship must lack the peculiar intimacy which should be its joy and strength. The duties of friendship include all those, which we have discussed when dealing with social relations in general. A friendship, which failed, *e.g.*, in truth, or honour, or kindness, or patience, would soon become extinct. Its master grace, however, is loyalty. Friends must

* Amiel's Journal, p. 284.

be true to one another. This is wrongly interpreted to mean that we must support our friend even if he is in the wrong, and must never rebuke him when he is at fault; for that would be to betray his highest interests. But it does mean that we are to set him first in our thoughts, to rejoice in his prosperity even more than if it were our own, to defend him from aspersions on his character, to spend means and strength in preserving him from evil, and to be, in things small and great, faithful even, if need be, unto death.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE STATE.

IN the world of human activity there are many spheres of interest, each of which has its special rules and forms of action. Society thus exhibits a great variety of competing interests, which aggressive selfishness and the fierceness of rivalry might easily convert into intolerable anarchy. There is thus, in the nature of the case, room and need for one all-embracing sphere, which shall include these special centres of interest, and harmonise them into one organic whole. Such a sphere is the State, the totality of the body politic; and this we find existing wherever man has risen above the stage of savagery, and has become aware of higher wants than food and raiment. By the constitution of his nature, man is a "political animal," fitted and destined for

life within the complex and ordered realm of the State.

1. **THE NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE.**—When Christianity appeared, as a morally regenerative force, the separate nationalities or States of more ancient times had well-nigh disappeared before the iron uniformity of the Roman Empire. Hence we find a marked difference between Greek morality and that of the New Testament. Greek moral teaching, in its earlier forms, has much to say of the State, little of the individual. The earlier Greek ideal is that of the citizen devoted to the welfare of the State, and absorbed in its business. His private and domestic life falls into the background. When the New Testament was written, there were no longer separate free states or nationalities to which the citizen could give himself, and in which he could find his life and well-being. In the New Testament, accordingly, comparatively little space is occupied with civic virtues. It has but little occasion to develop the duties of a Christian in reference to the varied relations of political life from which, in point of fact, he was almost entirely excluded. It would be false, however, to say that the New Testament is non-patriotic in tone, or looks with indifference upon civic life, and has no counsel to give on the position and duties of Christian citizenship. In like manner, it would be historically incorrect to say that the early Christians made bad citizens, or avoided the service of the State. Christianity, by the great truths which it has made vital in the moral history of men, has created a Christian conception of the State, and has given a

divine sanction to the life and activities of citizenship. It summons men to exercise the rights and discharge the duties of citizens, as part of the service of God, to which their Christian standing binds them. Christ is King, and the State comes within His dominion. He rules amid the changing incidents of its history, and calls upon His servants to bring the institutions of the State into conformity with his purpose of redemption.

The main function of the State is to maintain and vindicate public right throughout the various departments of human life which are included within its compass. It is not a substitute for them, nor can it do their work for them. It cannot take the place, for instance, of the family, nor undertake the work of training children to useful and virtuous lives. It cannot take the place of the Church, or perform for the souls of men the spiritual ministry they require. It cannot regulate the whole life of a people, or take the guidance of action from beneath the control of the individual conscience.

It can provide, however, that the conditions be maintained under which a free, intelligent, and moral life can alone be lived. It can secure that no right be violated, that no individual or class shall invade or encroach upon the rights of another. It can open the path toward the full development of life and character among all the members of the community, removing every barrier of injustice or oppression, and promoting the unrestricted exercise of all native energy and talent. Individual life, the family, the various trades and classes and social organisations, find in the State their safeguard,

within whose shelter they grow in peace towards a ripe and fruitful maturity. The State is a moral organism. We may almost say that it is a moral personality, with a self-consciousness, a conscience, and a history of its own.

Its existence is thus based on the ultimate facts of human nature, which are the work of creative intelligence and power. Its authority is not derived from human device or consent, but is the embodiment and manifestation of the supreme authority of eternal universal right. The particular form which the State may assume will be fixed by the historic circumstances of each particular nation. Since the general aim of the State is to further the realisation of a full personal life among the citizens, we may conclude that the ideal constitution of the State will be democratic, a government "of the people, for the people, by the people." In our own country the movement of constitutional reform has undoubtedly been toward the realisation of this ideal. A wise community, however, will avoid hasty and speculative revolutions. Radicalism has learnt to study history, and to see that the present grows out of the past. The democracy of Great Britain retains the form of monarchy, which is our inheritance from the past. We are not yet convinced that by so doing we have missed any element of right or liberty which is secured under an avowedly Republican form of government.

The particular functions of the State in carrying out its aim are twofold: legislative, and administrative. By legislation, the laws which are to regulate the relations of individuals and classes are devised

and proclaimed with the supreme authority of the State. By administration, these laws are carried into effect and enforced throughout the community. An important branch of administration is the dispensation of justice, by which the law, which expresses and vindicates right in the life of the community, is maintained against all assault and encroachment from whatsoever source arising. "There are laws in Prussia," said the miller of Sans Souci; and the king had to bow before a right which even he dared not violate. Punishment, accordingly, is vested in the State. The rightfulness of punishment is based, not merely on its usefulness in maintaining the safety of life and property, and in reforming the criminal, but on its necessity as the recoil of law upon the transgressor. It is possible that Capital Punishment might be abolished; but the reason must not be sought in sentimentality, nor so expressed as to derogate from the majesty of law. Hitherto the highest wisdom of men has been unanimous that for wilful murder nothing less than this is the adequate response of law.

How far the administration of the State should pass beyond the vindication of justice toward the positive amelioration of the lot of individuals within its borders is a question which cannot be settled on merely theoretic principles. The tendency in the present day is certainly to cast more and more responsibility upon the State. Socialism would even urge that the State ought to possess all the means of production within the community, should direct their employment, and distribute the results. Against this may be urged the danger that the State should

thus itself violate the rights which it exists to vindicate, and make impossible that full development of personal life which it is bound as its first duty to provide for. An absolute State, even of pure Republican form, might become as grievous a tyranny even as an absolute Monarchy. Practically, every question of State interference of an immediate nature in the activities of the citizens must be determined on its merits, and not by the constraint of a narrow logic, whether individualistic or socialistic. It has been found well to give to the State the control of the postal service. It might turn out to be beneficial to the railway system were it similarly placed under State management. Education has been regarded since 1870 as a department of State. Other questions await settlement, such as the condition of the poor, trade practices, such as "sweating," and the regulation of the drink traffic; and preponderating public opinion calls for State interference in those matters.

If, however, at any time and on any pretext, the State should begin to deal with men as though they were things to be disposed of by a will other than their own, and controlled by an authority which had no basis in reason or right, it would have contradicted the ground of its own existence, and would have raised against itself the deathless hostility of conscience and of religion.

2. THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP.—The right of Citizenship within the State belongs to every subject born within its dominions. The claim to full civil and political rights is one which no State can afford to scorn or defy. Three

points, however, must be settled before the claim can be intelligible, and the acknowledgment of it practically valuable.* In the first place, the rights must be proved. It is vain to claim rights, unless these can be exhibited as inherent in the constitution of man, and coherent with the general well-being of the community. No man has rights which do wrong to his neighbour. The right to sacredness of person, to freedom of worship, to a share in government through the exercise of a vote, may be exhibited as just and inalienable; but the right to the land, to an old age pension, to the instruments of production, remain still to be proved, and await not only enactment but demonstration. In the second place, rights must be so conceded as to involve no violation of right. At the French Revolution the theory of the rights of man was proclaimed as a Gospel for the evils of the time; and when the golden age did not forthwith return, the theorists who had the direction of affairs filled France with bloodshed and cruelty. How a right, granted to exist, is to come into universal application, is the problem of statesmanship. To its solution must be brought a wisdom, at once conservative and progressive, which is the perquisite of no political party.

In the third place, it must be possible to exercise rights before the possession of them can be more than merely nominal. "To possess rights is not to be a citizen. It is to be merely on the way to become one. . . . Rights are not rewards nor decorations, nor ends in themselves. They are advantages,

* See MacCunn's "Ethics of Citizenship," chs. i., iii., iv.; a most wise and helpful book.

they are opportunities, they are instruments. And when any man has won them, this means simply, that henceforth he is set on a vantage ground, from which, secure from aggression, and unrepressed by tyranny, he may begin to do his duty." * Prior to all rights, therefore, as preliminary to their use, a man must be placed under conditions in which he may exercise them. He must be a man, if he is to be a citizen. All the elements, which go to make a full human life, must enter into his being. He must have means of sufficient livelihood. He must have a sacred and inviolable home life. He must have opportunity of intellectual development. He must be free to open his mind and conscience to the commanding influence of the will of God. If these opportunities of self-realization be denied him, while the right of citizenship is conferred on him, he is being most cruelly mocked. If he himself neglect them, his citizenship is a barren honour, for which he can offer no vindication, and of which he is in danger of being deprived. Only as he conscientiously uses them, and serves himself heir of all that is best in the history of his own nation and of mankind, does his citizenship become a real and valuable possession, adding dignity and power to his manhood.

The duties of citizenship may be summed up under these three heads—patriotism, obedience, and service.

1. Patriotism is the first virtue of the citizen. Our Lord himself is our pattern of this as well as of all other excellences of character. As he weeps

* M'Cunn's "Ethics of Citizenship," pp. 45, 46.

over Jerusalem, or mournfully predicts her destruction, we see how the passionate love of the Hebrew for his ancestral land, and for Jerusalem as its crowning glory, lives as a pure flame of pity in the heart of Jesus (Luke xix. 41 ; xxiii. 29). The same overmastering devotion to his people is seen in St Paul, whose letters throb with compassion and grief and great yearning over his kindred, and rise to a height where feeling confounds thought and language (Rom. ix. 3).

The feeling which prompts us to love our country, to delight in its familiar scenery, to exult in its past achievements, to thrill at the sight of national memorials, or the national flag, is natural and instructive, and is to be cultivated and elevated. We ought to inform ourselves of our national history, and take possession of the accumulated stores of wisdom and truth, of high purpose, and pure and reverent feeling, which are our birthright. We ought to gain an accurate conception of the present position and needs of our country, and should thus make our patriotism no evanescent impulse, but a steadfast resolution, a growing energy of soul. We ought to bring the inspiration of Christianity and the morality of the New Testament, to quicken, purify, and educate our patriotic sentiment. We are bound to avoid both the moral blindness which would palliate or excuse national transgression, and the gross materialism which concerns itself only about market values and physical comforts. In the cant of the day, Jingoism and Little Englandism designate policies, which, however different in form, are alike

in moral quality, and are alike regardless of our national duties and responsibilities. Patriotism in the public life of the citizen corresponds to self-respect in the narrower social spheres. The self we respect is the same and has the same moral worth in others as in ourselves. Even so the humanity we love and serve in persons of our own race, is the same in other races, and claims a like devotion. This does not imply that either individuality or nationality should be obliterated. It would be impossible and undesirable to absorb all nationalities in one universal State. It does bind us, however, to love our neighbours as ourselves; and this fundamental principle of New Testament morality, when applied to the sphere of international politics, implies that nations are members of the organism of humanity, and attain their separate welfare only through the advancement of all.

The desire to advance our own interests as a people, at the expense of the well-being of other races, is as criminal and as futile as the same conduct would be in the relations of man and man. An enlightened patriotism will always be disinterested and humanitarian. It follows that aggressive war is absolutely criminal, and that in the vindication of international right war must always be the last resort. Even justifiable war, moreover, must always have for its end, not the destruction of the enemy, but the re-establishment of those conditions under which the combatants shall cease to be enemies, and shall become helpers in each other's welfare. National interests are best concerned by

the discharge of national duties. Patriotism will find its noblest exercise in quickening the sense of national responsibility, and elevating the conception of the national destiny.

2. The State, being the sphere of public right, has a right to the obedience of its citizens. This is the civic virtue which in the New Testament has the largest place and the strongest emphasis. Under the political conditions of the Roman empire, there was little left for any citizen to do in reference to the State, save to obey the constituted authorities. Christianity did indeed aim at a stupendous revolution in the lives of men and nations. It proceeded, however, through the recognition of all right whose ground lay in the constitution of man as God had made it. It lays solemn emphasis, therefore, on the authority of the State, and enjoins even upon those whom the State regarded with suspicion or treated with injustice, the duty of obedience (Rom. xiii. 1-4; 1 Peter ii. 13-17; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2). The constituted authority has a claim to obedience, not as a human institution, or as vested in certain men, but as the organ of the supreme authority and sovereignty of God, His instrument for upholding right and justice in the land. Obedience, therefore, is to be rendered, not slavishly in immoral subjection to outward constraint, or in unreasoning loyalty to a family or dynasty, but joyfully and reverently, as to God and not to man. We have thus to observe that there are two authorities, the authority of the State and the authority of God (Matt. xxii. 15-22). The authority of the State is held under the authority of God. We are to obey

the State under the limits of the obedience we owe to God.

Thus it may happen that we have to disobey man, in order that we may render to God the obedience due to him (Acts iv. 19; v. 29). There may thus arise conflict of feeling, producing great perplexity of mind and keen pain of heart. Men may find themselves torn between love of a person or dynasty on the one hand, and reverence for the right on the other. Even in such cases, however, there is no real conflict of duty. The authority of man is valid, only when it agrees with the will of God. If it conflict with the will of God, we are bound to disobey it, and endure such consequences as the civil power may inflict upon us. The question here arises, are we never to do any more than suffer? Are we to allow a tyrant to oppress us, without defending ourselves, or bringing force to cope with the force so unjustly constraining us? In these days, the question is happily not a practical one.

There have been times in the history of our country, however, when it did demand instant solution. After the Reformation in 1560, Mary, Queen of Scots, arrived to take possession of her ancestral throne. She did so, fully determined to reign as an absolute monarch, to make her subjects obey her will simply because it was hers, and in particular to overthrow the reformed faith, and replace it by the Papacy. Here then was a clear issue, the authority of God speaking in His Word, or the authority of the earthly sovereign. The nobles might hesitate; but John Knox and the

Scottish people had no doubt of the course required of them. They must oppose the Queen. If it should appear that she was finally opposed to the will of God, and the cause of right, they would be released from the vow of obedience to her will, and would find themselves compelled to take from her the authority she had abused. In the interviews between Knox and the Queen, in which the history of the period is as it were condensed, this issue is stated with a clearness which astonishes us when we remember that the interlocutors were Prince and subject. "'Think ye,' quoth she, 'that subjects, having power, may resist their princes?' 'If their princes exceed their bounds,' quoth he, 'Madam, and do against that wherefore they should be obeyed, it is no doubt but they may be resisted, even by power.'" This was new to one, nursed in the traditions of absolute power, and the Queen, "stood as it were, amazed more than the quarter of an hour." "'Well, then,' she resumed, 'I perceive that my subjects shall obey you and not me.' 'God forbid,' he replied, 'that ever I take upon me to command any to obey me, or yet to set subjects at liberty to do what pleaseth them. But my travel is that both princes and subjects obey God, who commands Queens to be nurses unto His people.'"*

Revolution is, in fact, comparable to divorce. Marriage is already dissolved, when one or other of the persons united in it so acts as to destroy the moral conditions of the union; and

* *Cf.* Taylor Innes' "John Knox," ch. vi., The Conflict with Queen Mary.

divorce gives effect to the dissolution. In like manner, when the rulers have already dissolved the bond between them and their subjects by perverting the function of the State, and making it serve, not the will of God or the cause of right, but some scheme of class or dynastic aggrandizement, revolution becomes not permissible merely, but necessary as bounden duty. To quote again from one of these interviews between Knox and Queen Mary: "'Will ye,' said she, 'that they shall take my sword into their hands?' 'The sword of justice, Madam,' he answered, 'is God's; and if the magistrate will not use it, the people must do so. And, therefore, it shall be profitable to your Majesty to consider what is the thing your Grace's subjects look to receive of your Majesty, and what it is ye ought to do unto them by mutual contract. They are bound to obey you, and that not but in God. You are bound to keep laws unto them. You crave of them service: they crave of you protection and defence against wicked doers.'"

Within the scope of the will of God, as expressed in His Word, obedience to the law of the land is part of our Christian duty. Transgression of law is crime. Probably few, who make a credible profession of Christianity, ever attempt direct breach of law. Evasions of law, however, are sometimes looked upon as permissible. The State is looked on as an enemy, whom it is allowable to circumvent; and persons who, in social relations, pass for honourable and kindly men, will cheat the revenue by a little mild smuggling, or a few skilful omissions when they fill up a schedule. It need hardly be

said that such conduct is criminal, immoral, and degrading.

3. The State is the sphere within which a moral life is possible. From the State we have received life and nourishment. To the State, therefore, we owe loyal and willing service. "For each society as it offers us its privileges asks of us our service, our reverent and loyal devotion to its welfare, our surrender, for its sake, of private aims and preferences; it asks us to keep up in our generation that which has been finest, greatest, worthiest in the past."* There may come times in the history of a nation when the citizens are required to lay on the altar of the national existence strength, wealth, life itself. Against the claim of the State, in the supreme crises of its history, no claim of property or even of life can avail. So it was in the Netherlands, when a whole people offered itself a living sacrifice for freedom, truth, and justice, and counted devotion even to death no more than a reasonable service. It might be that a time, wellnigh as terrible, might come even to us as a good and perfect gift, if we ever were sinking into neglect of duty, forgetfulness of right, or pusillanimous love of wealth or ease. Better for any nation to be as the Netherlands, drenched in blood, than to be as Spain triumphing in unrighteous force, and ultimately cast, as it is at this day, in God's contempt, aside.

Apart from these great eras of history, the service, which, as citizens, we owe the State, is great and continuous. We are bound, in the widest sense, to work for the State in whatever lot of life providence has

* "Studies in the Christian Character," by Dean Paget, p. 205.

set us. No man ought to be a consumer merely. All ought to be producers, contributing by hand or brain to the stock of national wealth. The wealth of the nation is no inexhaustible quantity. It always stands within "measurable distance of exhaustion," being never, so we are told, more than five or six times our annual production. He that will not work, therefore, is, in reality whatever he may be in law, a pauper, fed out of that which does not belong to him, depriving others of the means of livelihood. He may live in a palace, or a poor-house, the same moral quality attaches to him. The State can reach the man in the poor-house. It is not so easy to lay hands on the man in the palace ; but there can be no doubt of his moral obligation to serve the State by his labour.

More directly, we are bound to give our aid to all worthy public causes. Public spirit is one aspect of that love of our neighbour which is the essence of Christianity. The hospitals which shelter our sick, the colleges and schools which educate our youth, the buildings which are required for uses of government, and all institutions which aid the development of industry, science, and art, have a claim upon our support. An honourable pride in the city wherein we dwell, an eager desire to see it more fair and prosperous, and a willingness to serve it in any capacity open to us, are marks of a true Christian citizen. It is sometimes urged that great public institutions ought to be directly managed by the State, the funds necessary for their support being raised by taxation. Special cases must be treated on their merits. But in general we ought to be very careful lest we lose

more than we gain, and pay for State support the price of loss of public sentiment, of stimulus to generosity and of individual concern in great causes.

Service of a statutory kind we are also bound to render. There are necessities of the State, such as the expenses of government, of national defence, and of the dispensation of justice, which can only be met by taxation; and there are necessities of the lesser civic communities, the parish or the city or county, which can only be provided in a similar way. This taxation we are to bear loyally, not as a burden laid on us by an alien power, but as the obligation of good citizens, taking their share in the furtherance of the common weal. Among the continental nations, conscription prevails, and direct military service has to be rendered by the citizens. There can be no doubt, on the one hand, of the miseries of such a system; and we are happy in escaping them; but there can be none, on the other hand, of the right of the State to claim it, if it be found necessary. In the meantime, we shall do well, by fostering our Volunteer forces, to make conscription unnecessary. Let young men voluntarily fit themselves for warlike services, the necessity for which is always a possibility; so shall the evils of compulsion be avoided.

The highest service which the State requires of its subjects is participation in the government of the country. Such participation is directly effected by the vote of the citizens electing their representatives to Parliament, and to the other lesser governing bodies throughout the country, such as town

councils, parish councils, or school boards. The right to such participation has been almost completely won among us. The point to be insisted on now is not the right, but its correlative duty. We are bound to send into Parliament and other similar bodies men competent for the task of deliberation and decision in reference to the public weal. Here the duty of the Christian to exercise his influence and record his vote becomes most apparent. Abstention, on the ground of spirituality, is a mischievous error of judgment, if it be not a hypocritical excuse for selfish indifference to the welfare of others. Every Christian man who has a vote ought to use it. The government of our country, spite of monarchical forms, is essentially democratic. In the making of national history every citizen has a share, and for national actions every citizen has individual responsibility. For the due discharge of his duty in this respect the citizen must prepare himself by intelligent study of the problems which arise, and by the application to them of Christian principle. He is not a citizen merely when he votes. He is to make his vote the issue of clear thinking and worthy living. He is at the same time bound to aid in the preparation of his fellow-citizens for the same crowning act of citizenship. The vote is the outcome of public opinion, in the formation of which each citizen ought to bear an intelligent part. The man in the street governs the British Empire. The good government of the Empire, the worthy discharge of national duty, and the high place of our country amid the peoples of the earth depend, therefore,

upon the educated intelligence, the trained thought, and sound moral judgment of the masses of the community. To maintain public opinion at a high intellectual and moral level is, therefore, the duty of every private citizen. To give it expression, to enforce it, and guide it, through the medium of the public press, is a most honourable and most important calling.

The due fulfilment of our duties as citizens is not only beneficial to the State, but is most helpful to ourselves in confirming and ennobling our Christian character. It affords a practical means of escape from the tyranny of self-interest. The gravest moral danger of our time is not dogmatic atheism, nor even sensual vice; though neither of these is far to seek. Rather does it lie in the prevailing love of ease, physical comfort, and pleasure and recreation. Men grow absorbed in their narrow personal and domestic concerns. They are busy in making a livelihood, and accumulating, if possible, a fortune. They bring all religious and political questions to the test of money. They have a cynical disbelief in all motives except such as are selfish, and in all causes which do not aggrandise some class or party. They lose the capacity of generous admiration, unselfish enthusiasm, and devoted service. Comfort eats out their heart. They are not vicious; but they are plunged in a "virtuous materialism." Deliverance will be greatly aided by a conscientious realization of citizenship. In the service of the State, men will be lifted out of themselves, inspired with motives that are not selfish, and taught to find their highest individual advantage in the furtherance of the public weal.

As Athens and Venice were to their citizens in the olden time the objects of all-absorbing devotion, so our country may be to us the object of deep and passionate love. Our Christianity will have no other effect upon our patriotism than that of elevating its ideal and widening its scope.

The service of the State, thus viewed, is part of the service we owe to Christ our King. To obey the laws, to aid all worthy civic causes, to govern in the interests of righteousness, is to enthrone our Lord, as King of Kings, and to extend His Sovereignty till the kingdoms of the earth are His.

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CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH.

THE Kingdom of God is established in the midst of this present world. The sovereignty of Christ extends over every department of human life. In the spheres of action, which we have been considering in these pages, we serve the Lord Christ, and find our opportunity of witnessing for Him, and of growing in His likeness.

The Kingdom of God, however, while established in this world, does not belong to it. It is essentially spiritual and eternal, and consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xiv. 17). In this supersensuous aspect of its being, accordingly, it has a special organ in the world—viz., the Christian Church. Through the Church the spiritual

dominion of the Kingdom of God is testified to the consciences of men, and the claim of Christ upon men is maintained and vindicated. The Church, therefore, is a sphere of action, distinct from any of these we have formerly mentioned, but in full harmony with them. Living as members of families, in business and social relations with our fellow-men, and as citizens of the State, we are, or may be, at the same time members of the Christian Church. Our activity therein will complete our labours in all other departments of life, and give to them guidance and inspiration.

The Christian Church is the crown and consummation of all the organic relations which link men together in moral and spiritual fellowship. Without the Christian Church, society would be in perpetual danger of falling back into the anarchy of mere selfishness. In the pages that follow let us consider briefly, first, the doctrine of the Church; second, our duties as Christians toward it.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.—1. Its Constitution and Membership.—The classical passage here is that which has been misinterpreted by the Papacy in so paltry and crass a manner (Mt. xvi. 17-19). Our Lord had before Him, if we may so speak, a great venture. He was to go to Jerusalem to die upon the Cross for the redemption of the world. If this great deed is not to be fruitless, there must be some institution provided by which the power of redemption shall be proclaimed and communicated to men. If He can secure such a basis, He will go forward. This He found in the company of men who believed on Him, whose con-

victions that day were uttered by the Apostle Peter. Here then is His Church in the initial stage of its existence. This would be His instrument in the great task which shall occupy the whole dispensation of time. Here He would abide by His spirit, as the ever present Head and King of His people. The period of the earthly life of Jesus is a lovely picture of that which is enduring fact: Christ the Redeemer, present in the community of believing men and women, training, governing, and employing them, till this dispensation cease, and the Kingdom need no longer a Church to be its instrument, because it shall have fully come, and shall have been given up by its mediatorial Sovereign to God the Father. The faith of St Peter is, therefore, the condition of membership in the Christian Church.

The Church embraces all who acknowledge Christ as Redeemer and King. It is described in glowing language in the New Testament, the writers using every sacred and profound association to embody that which is divine and spiritual. The Church is a Temple (Ephes. ii. 19-21; 1 Peter ii. 5), a glorious fabric, in which Christ is at once the foundation and chief corner stone, and of which the living stones are those who have been reconciled to God by the Cross. It grows in stately beauty throughout the ages, till at last the epoch arrives when the Church's work shall no more be needed, and the city of God be manifested, whereof he who saw it in vision says, "I saw no temple therein." The Church is the Bride of Christ, found by Him, poor, helpless, sin-

stained, and by Him purchased with His blood, cleansed from defilement, and robed in righteousness, till she begin to reflect the loveliness of her Head and Spouse (Ephes. v. 22 32 ; Rev. xix. 7 ; xxi. 9). The Church is the Body of Christ, wherein the fulness of the unseen but Living One continually resides, all believing men and women being articulated into this divine organism, vitally united to the Head and to one another in a perfect fellowship (Col. i. 18).

To this Church belong certain glorious attributes. It is One ; in the language of our Scottish Confession "one company and multitude of men, chosen of God, who rightly worship Him by true faith in Christ Jesus," whose unity is deeper than any division which pride can invent and folly perpetuate. It is Holy ; "the communion not of profane persons, but of saints, who as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem have fruition of the most inestimable benefits, to wit, of one God, one Lord Jesus, one faith, one baptism," holy in the spirit of its life and in the example of multitudes of its lowliest members. It is Catholic, *i.e.*, "universal, because it contains the elect of all ages, of all realms, nations and tongues, be they of the Jews or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion and society with God the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ, through Sanctification of His Holy Spirit," Catholic with a breadth that crosses the barriers of human misconception and dogmatism. It is Invisible, "known only to God, who alone knows whom He has chosen ; and comprehends as well (as said is) the Elect that be departed, commonly called the

Kirk Triumphant, and they that yet live and fight against Sin and Satan as shall live hereafter," and therefore not unreal or shadowy, but the most real of all institutions, in a world, which, with all its organizations, civilizations, policies, dynasties, nationalities, is destined to pass away, and be forgotten as a dream when one awaketh.

2. Its Purpose and Functions. Standing midway between the Kingdom of God with its divine powers and meanings, and the world of human life and interest where that Kingdom is to be established, the Church has a double function. It has to act toward God on behalf of humanity ; and it has to act toward humanity on behalf of God. To this must be added a third function, viz., that of maintaining itself in life and efficiency. In other words, its function Godward is Worship; its function in reference to itself is Edification ; its function manward is Witness. (*a*) Worship. This is the primary and fundamental function of the Church. God's revelation of Himself in Creation and Redemption awaits responsive adoration from the humanity He has made and saved. This response is made by the Christian Church in its own name, as the company of the redeemed, and on behalf of humanity for whom God gave His Son. Man was meant to be the Priest of the material world, gathering into himself the meaning of creation, and uttering its praise in the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth. Man has failed in this priestly task, has claimed creation for his own, and has uttered no other voice than that of pride and vainglory. The Church, therefore, is the Priest of this erring race, uttering

in its stead the humiliation, repentance, surrender, and adoration, due from the sinful creature to the holy and merciful Creator. The central element in Church life, accordingly, the primary object of all Church assemblies, is common or public worship, which is the action of the whole priestly body. Such common worship has numerous secondary benefits to those who partake in it. These, however, do not constitute the reason of the act of worship. Worship, it cannot be too often repeated, is the first concern of the Church ; beneficial results to the Church itself come as a reflex blessing upon the worshippers. The chief aim, however, and the dominant motive in the act of worship, must ever be to give glory to God. This would remain the duty of the Church, even were we to suppose, what is inconceivable, that no benefit should accrue to those discharging it. Without the Church the world would be cursed by sin, unhallowed by devotion, with no holy place, no altar of sacrifice, no ministering priesthood.

(*b*) Edification. The life of the Church is essentially social. It flows from the Head through all the members, so that the vitality of one member is dependent on the health of the whole body. The life of the Church, therefore, must be maintained in vigour and purity. The Church must concern itself with its own spiritual life, not in any selfish spirit, but as the very condition of its efficiency. The worship of a dead Church would be blasphemy. The witness of a dead Church would be a lie. Edification is secured as a secondary, but immediately consequent, result of public worship.

In worship, the common faith finds utterance, the common sacrifice is offered. The mere assemblage for that purpose stimulates the faith, and leads to deeper sacrifice. There is attached, moreover, to assemblies held for this purpose most definite promises of blessing (Matt. xviii. 20; John xx. 19; 1 Cor. v. 4). The voice of the Church in worship is heard and answered in the dwelling-place of God. There is thus a quickening which can be experienced only when the Church is assembled in common worship. Edification ought, further, to be made a special object of the Church's activity. Means must be taken to secure that each member of the organism is in living contact with the body, and is drawing in its share of the common life (Ephes. iv. 16; *cf.* Rom. i. 12). "Each of us," says Paul, "by the other's faith, both yours and mine," and so emphasizes the essential community of Christian experience. Beyond the stated assemblies of public worship, therefore, there must be frequent intercourse among the members of the Church upon the concerns of the higher life. The Scottish Church of an earlier period effectively provided for this want by its method of catechising. It cannot be said that in modern times we have secured any effective substitute for this now discarded method.

If the Church grew as naturally and perfectly as a plant, edification would be its sole concern. Sin, however, still operates within the Church. Evil habits tend to establish themselves within a professedly holy society. Scandals occur which are as running sores in the body. To edification, there-

fore, must be added discipline. In the New Testament, which consists largely of letters written to communities emerging out of the unspeakable corruption of heathen society, the subject of discipline receives special mention (1 Cor. v.; 2 Cor. ii.; Tit. iii. 10). Our Lord Himself legislated upon this subject (Matt. xiii. 24-30; xviii. 17). The Church is not called upon or entitled to determine by direct spiritual intuition, who are and who are not vitally united to Christ. She is summoned, however, on pain of forfeiting the Spirit's indwelling, to deal with offences which openly contradict the profession which all her members make. She must practice self-purification as condition of self-preservation.

(*c*) Witness. The Church having turned to God in act of worship, now turns to the world in act of testimony. Let it be distinctly understood that the Church is not responsible directly for the redemption of the world. The glory of saving men redounds to Christ alone. The shame of rejecting Christ belongs to the individual will. Our Lord, however, has chosen His Church to be the medium of witness, and has determined to use the instrumentality of man in effecting His divine purpose. The Church is responsible for bearing witness to the grace of God. The Church's witness is the only expressly appointed, and ordinarily employed means of bringing mankind to the acknowledgment of God in Christ. The Church which neglects the function of witness falsifies its own profession of faith in Christ, and declares in effect that redemption is not the necessity of the race,

and was not worth the purchase price of blood. The Church which fulfils this function grows by the witness it bears, becoming clearer in perception, deeper in conviction, more confirmed in faith.

The witness of the Church is borne chiefly in three forms. *The witness of public worship* (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25). The mere fact of assembly for such a purpose is demonstrative of faith, which cannot fail to be impressive. The spectacle of a Christian congregation engaged in the exercises of worship testifies that they are united by a common life and animated by a common hope. *The direct preaching of the Gospel* (Mark xvi. 15; Rom. x. 17, 18; Col. i. 23; Ephes. iii. 8-10). Redemption is emphatically a deed, the deed, which the need of man required, accomplished by One competent to perform it. Hence to men, ignorant, in part, of the need, and wholly ignorant of the deed, it is necessary to proclaim both in their depth and completeness. The Church, let it be repeated, is not responsible for men's acceptance of the gospel; but she is responsible for its effective proclamation to "every creature." *The witness of life* (Phil. ii. 15, 16; Matt. v. 13, 14). Here is the larger sphere of witnessing bearing. Character and Conduct are the eloquent witness of the reality of the Sovereignty under which we profess to be. Lacking this supporting testimony, worship and preaching become worse than useless, and produce, not faith, but bitter unbelief.

3. The Branches of the Church.—The Church, as the representative and instrument of the kingdom of God in the earth, necessarily assumes an

organised form, and takes its place as a visible society among the other institutions of human activity. At once, therefore, we are confronted with the question of the notes of the true Church. When a society of professed believers claims to be the Church, or a Church, to what test shall we bring this claim?

The answer of the Reformers to this question may be given in the words of our Scottish Confession. "The notes, signs, and assured tokens whereby the immaculate spouse of Christ Jesus is known from the horrible harlot, the Kirk Malignant, we affirm, are neither Antiquity, Title usurped, lineal Descent, nor multitude of men approving one error. . . . The notes, therefore, of the true Kirk of God we believe, confess, and avow to be, first, the true preaching of the Word of God, into the which God has revealed Himself unto us, as the writings of the Prophets and Apostles do declare. Secondly, the right administration of the Sacraments of Christ Jesus, which must be annexed unto the word and promise of God, to seal and confirm the same in our hearts. Last, ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered, as God's word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed, and virtue nourished." That is to say, nothing that is of man, however venerable or imposing, constitutes any society, however great, wealthy, or powerful, a branch of the Holy Catholic Church. But wherever, in any society, however small or obscure, these notes of the immediate presence and authority of Christ are to be found, there, without doubt, is the true Church of Christ.

It is to be noted that it cannot be established from the New Testament, that any particular form of government is intended to be regarded as a note of the true Church. Organisation there must be, together with officials possessed of special rights and duties. This is clearly recognised in the New Testament, and certain outstanding features are distinguished; *e.g.*, Acts vii. 1-6; 1 Cor. xii. 28; Ephes. iv. 11, 12. But no scheme of offices is given, the presence of which shall constitute the Church, or the absence of which shall invalidate the claim of any denomination to be a branch of the Catholic Church. One negative regulation does stand forth in the whole New Testament treatment of the subject. Whatever form the organisation take, it must not stand between the believing people and Christ their Head. Whatever officers be appointed, they must never dare to assume the rights and privileges which belong to the whole company of believers. Sacerdotalism is anti-Christ. The Church is the communion of saints, "a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"; 1 Peter ii. 5. Within the Church of God there is no room for any other priesthood than that, into which every human being, coming to God through Jesus Christ, is thereby ordained.

As a mere form of government, therefore, there can be no objection to episcopacy, on the score of New Testament principles. If, however, there is in the New Testament no trace of diocesan episcopacy, if, historically, prelacy has proved a danger to the freedom of the children of

God, and has been prone to ally itself with sacerdotal claims, there exist very sound reasons why we should reject such a system. Our claim for Presbyterianism is not that it is divinely prescribed, so that the true Church must necessarily be Presbyterian. We do claim for it, however, that it corresponds more nearly than any other form of government to the outline presented in the New Testament, and that, historically, it has been found admirably adapted to secure both order and liberty in the Christian Church.

The Church, as an organised body existing in any particular community or nation, necessarily comes into definite relations with the State. Into the relations between Church and State it is not necessary to enter further than to indicate the general lines of Christian conduct in reference to them. In general it is plain that the relation ought to be one of full harmony and hearty alliance. The State, aiming at the highest welfare of the citizens, will find in the Church the most effective agent in the development of the national virtue, wherein the prosperity of the nation properly consists. The State ought, therefore, to give the Church amplest countenance and support. The Church, seeking to establish the Kingdom of God in the community, recognises the State to be the divinely instituted organ of right, which is one aspect of the divine Sovereignty. The Church, accordingly, honours and upholds the State, and yields to the State heartiest obedience in all civil matters. Such an alliance is the ideal relationship of Church and State. It needs no legal form or financial endow-

ment to cement it. It will lose its moral force if it be stiffened into a political connection.

The Church, moreover, differs from all other spheres of interest within the community in owning a direct and immediate subjection to Christ its King. In all civil matters, it stands on the same platform with other institutions, and must obey the State, even should the State treat it harshly. In those sacred and spiritual affairs which are its proper concern, the Church stands apart from all other institutions and from the State itself, and owns allegiance to Christ alone, and can take its orders from none but Him alone. In such a matter as the summoning of its supreme court, the Church dare not wait on any human authority, and if the State claim the right of interference the Church is bound to resist. "Take from us the liberty of assemblies," said Knox to Lethington, "and take from us the evangel." In so grave a spiritual matter as the appointment of ministers to preach, dispense the Sacraments, and take pastoral oversight of a congregation, the Church is bound to permit no authority to intervene between itself and Christ. The principle thus briefly indicated is that known as the spiritual independence of the Church. This does not mean that the Church is independent of all authority, or claims to have of itself a divine authority ; but it does mean that the Church is wholly dependent upon, and is wholly bound by, the authority of Christ ; and it does imply that the Church and its faithful members are bound, should the State seek to impose its authority contrary to the will of Christ, to decline obedience, even at risk of life itself.

II. THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TOWARD THE CHURCH.—1. Their preliminary duty is to unite with the Church by an act of public acknowledgment. In the case of those born within her pale, as the children of professed believers, Baptism has already expressed and sealed their relation to Christ and His Church. They are now, therefore, called upon to ratify the deed of Baptism by their own personal and voluntary act. The duty of Christians to belong to the Church of Christ in one or other of its visible embodiments may be pressed from various points of view.

It is a duty we owe to Christ Himself. If we believe in Him, and are the recipients of inestimable benefits from His hand, it is our duty as honourable men, to enter the company which He has gathered round Himself. To be a disciple secretly is surely an unmanly thing. It will be found growingly irksome to maintain our position as unconfessed believers. Ultimately our faith will weaken to the point of extinction. Faith that saves is faith that makes confession (Rom. x. 9, 10). To stand aloof from the Church of Christ, criticised and assailed as she is in the world, is in effect to deny Christ before men. *It is a duty which we owe to ourselves.* To enter the Church is essential to the development of our Christian life. The Christian life is essentially social. The relation which binds us to Christ binds us to our fellow-believers. The life we have is one which we share with them, and can be retained only if we abide in fellowship with them. The privileges of grace are the property primarily of the Church, and secondarily of its members.

Thus Calvin dwells with great emphasis on forgiveness as a permanent possession of the Church. "Let us surely hold that if we are admitted and engrafted into the body of the Church, the forgiveness of sins has been bestowed, and is daily bestowed on us, in divine liberality, through the intervention of Christ's merits, and the sanctification of the Spirit. . . . In short, by the very arrangement of the Creed, we are reminded that forgiveness of sins always resides in the Church of Christ, for after the Church is, as it were, constituted, forgiveness of sins is subjoined." The realization of forgiveness, therefore, depends on membership in the Church. "Beyond the pale of the Church," says Calvin, "no forgiveness of sins, no salvation can be hoped for."* If this be true of our mere standing as Christians, much more is it true of our growth in grace. It can be secured only by our active membership in the Church. Isolation is weakness; ultimately death.

It is a duty which we owe to our fellow-Christians. The social relations of the Christian life are thoroughly reciprocal. We depend upon them for life and well-being; they in like manner depend upon us for certain elements in a full Christian experience. Each Christian has something to contribute to the common stock out of which all are nourished and grow strong. Something of knowledge, of spiritual power, of grace and virtue, belongs to each individual, which none but he can contribute to his brethren. To deny them this which he has, is to do them wrong, and is finally to forfeit that which he seemeth to have. The fundamental principle of the Christian

* "Institutes," B. IV., ch. i. 4, 21, 27.

life is "Freely ye have received, freely give." Impartation is the security of possession. *It is a duty which we owe to the world.* The world waits to be redeemed. The Church is the divinely chosen instrument for executing the redemptive purpose of God. For a Christian to separate himself from the Church is to condemn himself to inefficiency. It implies, moreover, that he has a different opinion from Christ as to how His work is to be done in the world. As well might a private soldier separate himself from the commander and his army, and propose to attack the enemy according to his own private plan of campaign with his own puny resources.

There is a churchmanship which arrogates to itself the name of "high," but is, in reality, low and base. It vexes itself about "orders"; and mightily concerns itself with vestments and ritual. It is intensely proud and sectarian, and exhibits itself chiefly in unchurching all who will not submit to its claims. There is, however, a churchmanship which makes no claims for itself, but seeks only to carry out the will of Christ. It presents itself to the world in no pride of office, with no censorious criticism even of those who differ from it; but at the same time with a distinct testimony to what is the command of Christ laid upon all His servants. It acknowledges the virtues of those who remain "Christians unattached," but points out what they miss, and what danger they are in. It acknowledges the good work done by societies which are not churches; but it declares they can never be substitutes for the Church, or do its work.

It laments the sins and failures of the Church, and throws itself upon Christ for their pardon and removal. But it cannot deny Christ, or dismiss His plan, to invent for itself some new form of association, some new kind of machinery. It reveres the Church as "the Mother of all the godly," and declares that "there is no other means of entering into life, unless she conceive us in the womb and give us birth; unless she nourish us at her breast, and, in short, keep us under her charge and government, until, divested of mortal flesh, we become like the angels." *

2. Having become members of the Church, the duty of Christians is to enter with definite individual participation into the discharge of all the functions of the Church.

In the Christian Church all the members share equally in the privileges of the Church. Christianity "interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. . . . For communicating instruction, and for preserving public order; for conducting religious worship, and for dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people are never regarded as transferred, or even delegated to these officers. They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the Church, and the like; but the sacerdotal title is never once conferred upon them. The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the

* "Institutes," B. iv., ch. i. 4.

members of the Christian brotherhood"* (1 Pet. ii. 5; Rev. i. 6; v. 10; xx. 6).

This great truth we must defend against any encroachment, however slight it may seem. It cannot be too well marked, however, that the highest defence of right is performance of duty. If the Christian people do not perform their priestly duties, they are in danger of losing their priestly rights, and having imposed upon them a sacerdotal caste.

The functions of the Church, accordingly, are to be performed by the members of the Church. Each member has individual responsibility in this matter, which he cannot shift to any other on any excuse whatever.

We are bound to bring to the work of the Church, first, ourselves, as we have already yielded ourselves to Christ (2 Cor. viii. 5); and then all gifts, capacities, means, and opportunities as God shall require them The work of the Church we have already specified as mainly three-fold. In each department of it, therefore, we are to take direct part. (1) Worship. It is the duty of every member of the Church to take part in public worship. This duty may be presented in various aspects. *It is the service which God specially requires of us.* It is often urged that "Sunday is the only day I have. I work hard all the week. I am up late on Saturday. I am perfectly at liberty to use it for rest and recreation." Part of this contention we shall consider immediately. We deny that worship interferes with rest. The point we here insist on, however, is the duty of

* Lightfoot, essay on "The Christian Ministry," in his commentary on Philippians.

worshipping God. Is He to have no distinct place in our life? Are we never to make special acknowledgment of His being and goodness? Can we ignore Him without sin? The Church exists for worship. We claim membership and priestly office. How then can we absent ourselves from the altar of worship? Let it be well understood that the Church is not a lecture hall. It is a place where prayer is wont to be made. It cannot be urged as a duty binding on any soul to come and hear a man preach. It is certain that we can read in books better sermons than we shall ever hear. This, however, has nothing to do with the duty of worship. That remains whether the sermon be excellent or poor. It is sin to neglect it.

It is, moreover, *necessary to us as means of self-culture.* Sunday is ours; made for us, not we for it. Let us never commit the tactical error of defending a spiritual duty on legal grounds. The Sabbath rest is not a tax exacted by a jealous God, who grudges our liberty. It is a gift generously bestowed by a loving Father, who knows what His children need, and desires their welfare. The practical question is, How are we to use the gift? The answer to this depends on the view we take of human nature. If we regard it as wholly material, or limited to things seen and temporal, we shall certainly be quite right to use the Sunday for mere self-indulgence, for pleasures, whether grosser or more refined. If, however, we recognise that human nature has affinities with the unseen and eternal, and reaches its full perfection only when its capacity for communion with God is exercised, such

a method of spending Sunday will be seen to be beneath our dignity as men. Worship is the only means whereby we can truly give rest, and, in the literal sense of the word, recreation, to the soul of man.

It is also *a service we render to the community at large.* It may be true that we as individuals might spend a profitable day by our study fire or in the open fields, in solitary communion with God. We ought, however, to consider how this conduct will affect society round us. If we surrender the sanctity of the day of rest, shall we have served or injured our fellow-men? What would the introduction among us of a "continental Sunday" be to our working classes—loss or gain? If we believe that men are made for God, and not for the perishing world, we must answer loss, infinite loss. To allow ourselves to neglect worship, to surrender the unique character of the day of rest, on the ground that we ourselves can spend it profitably alone, is grossest selfishness. Making journeys in trains, cycling, visiting, etc., on Sunday might not do us as individuals harm, and are not to be condemned as breach of any legal precept. But for Christians they are breach of the law of love. The ground on which we are to defend the observance of a public day of rest is the need of man. The spirit in which we are to urge it is not Pharisaic legalism but Christlike compassion.

(2) Edification. In the vitality of the Church each member has a personal interest, for upon the fulness of the Church's life depends the health and

vigour of his own. It is a duty, therefore, to himself as well as to the brotherhood to seek the spiritual welfare of all. The members are bound to cultivate the spirit of brotherhood among themselves. The law of love is to be fulfilled in concentrated and typical form among the members of the Christian Society (Gal. vi. 10; 1 Pet. ii. 17). No Church can be strong or efficient whose members are cold and indifferent to one another, and omit the exercises of homely human kindness. Divisions of class or caste are an abomination in the household of faith. It is useless praying for blessing where these are permitted to exist. Mutual kindness, sympathy and friendliness form the often-neglected presupposition of spiritual blessing. The duties of forbearance and forgiveness in like manner gain peculiar urgency, as they are binding upon members of the Church. It cannot be too solemnly urged that no gift is accepted on the altar while we have a bad conscience toward our brother (Matt. v. 23). High spirituality, fervency in prayer, zeal for conversions, abundance of gifts, are no substitute for meekness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Edification begins, therefore, in the commonplace virtues of ordinary social relations.

Beyond this lies the whole field of more direct spiritual influence. It is the duty of members of the Church to make use of the means of grace, not merely for their own private benefit, but for the benefit of the whole Church. Every Christian absenting himself causelessly from the worship of the Church is injuring his fellow members. It is a duty, not merely to attend

stated assemblies of the Church, as at so-called canonical hours, but also to cultivate spiritual fellowship by all means open to us. Such means must be left to the discretion of individual communities, and to the guidance that lies in circumstances. There can be no doubt, however, that the common life of the Church requires special modes of expression, and will be apt to decay when these are denied to it. It is part of our work for Christ and the Church to devise and support such means of close spiritual intercourse.

Discipline is, as we have noticed, part of edification. Here the individual member has a great duty. On the one hand, he must so conduct his relations toward an offending brother, that the case may not come before the Church for discipline (Matt. xviii. 15-17). On the other hand, when discipline has to be exercised he must give the Church the support of his approval. Discipline depends on the moral standard of the Church. Where that is low, discipline is ineffective. There are sins, prevalent in Scotland, which discipline has proved ineffective to reduce, because the conscience of Christian people has not been roused to a sufficient sense of their shame. The duty of elevating the tone of public opinion, which we noted as binding on the citizen of the State, is still more obligatory on the member of the Church. We are so to live, and think, and speak, that it shall be impossible for such offences to survive within the Christian Church.

(3) Witness. This is the great task of the Church toward the world. Since the Church is not a set

of officials, but the whole communion of saints, this task belongs to each individual within the Church. The duty of the Christian is not exhausted when he has come to God to receive the "unspeakable gift" at His hand. Properly speaking it has only then begun. The duty of witness rules the whole Christian life. By attendance at public worship, by direct testimony of speech, and by the commentary and illustration of character, we are bound to witness for Christ. In the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world, our profession of Christianity gives us a vested interest, and ought to awaken in us a constant and generous enthusiasm, "for the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. v. 14). The missionary enterprise of the Church at home and abroad has been pursued throughout this century with renewed interest and with marked success. Yet it has to be confessed that those who are taking a direct concern in the spread of the Gospel bear even yet but a small proportion to the membership of the visible Church. The inference to be drawn is that, if so much has been accomplished by resources so small, much more may be confidently expected when each member of the Church shall realise that the missionary obligation is not the fancy of a few eccentric enthusiasts, but the immediate concern of each individual who is receiving in his own person the benefits of redemption.

The work of the Church in the discharge of its functions of worship, edification, and witness, is very varied, and requires all the resources of effort, Christian liberality, and prayer, which her members

can contribute. The work is hard, and makes constant demands for self-denial and self-sacrifice. The Church will be false to her calling if she allows her members to sit idle and unrebuked in the enjoyment of privilege. She must call her members in her Master's name out of their ease and self-indulgence, to take part in the redemption of the world. If, however, the work be hard, its reward is high. It affords to all engaged in it a splendid discipline of character, and a rich opportunity for increase in all the graces of the Christian life. It corrects the deadening and narrowing influence of secular business. It opens up a world of fresh and vivid human interests. It teaches us the pathos and tragedy of human life. It is an education in sympathy, benevolence, compassion, and the love of humanity. It trains us to know human nature, in the persons of others, and thus helps us to know and govern ourselves. Above all, in its magnitude, it teaches us humility, and leads us out of ourselves into the fellowship of God. It is thus the noblest of all the means of grace ; and those who use it most worthily are not conscious of conferring favours on the Church or the world, since in all their service for love of God and man, they are themselves the greatest recipients.*

* "Counsels to a Church Member." Published by the Publications Committee of the Church of Scotland is a good statement of the duties of Christians in the church.—The Edinburgh Press, 9 and 11 Young Street, Edinburgh.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

WE have thus traced the life of a Christian through the various spheres of action in which he is called on to play his part—the Family, the Business of Life, Social Relations, the State, and the Church. It remains to remark that within all human life, and beneath all its visible manifestations, is God, Who is Spirit. He is present in all the affairs of life. He touches us on every side of our nature. We cannot escape from Him; and those who know Him have Him ever with them. All the actions of Christian life are performed before Him. He is the object of all Christian service. The duties of the Christian, therefore, could not be enumerated in any account, however complete and detailed; for they are all the consequences of this fundamental and all comprehensive duty of love to God. Love to God, indeed, is scarcely to be called a duty. Rather is it the power of God's love to us, arising within the heart of the redeemed as a pure fountain of energy.

"The very God! think, Ahib dost thou think?
So, the All-great were the All-loving too—
So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
Thou hast no power, nor may'st conceive of mine,
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee.'"

When we speak of love to God, accordingly, we have risen to the point where religion and morality blend together. We have reached the

deepest point of human experience, out of which emerge all the issues of duty and enjoyment. Love to God is not one passion among many. It is the answer of man to Him who first loved us; and it embraces the whole personality in every aspect of its complex constitution, with all its gifts and energies (Mark xii. 30). Love to God spreads through life as the motive power of all action and all behaviour.

It is summed up in three great exercises of soul. *Consecration;* the surrender of will to the will of the All-just and the All-good (Rom. vi. 13; xii. 1; Matt. vi. 24; 1 Cor. x. 31). Bishop Butler, who has been described as a mystic fallen on evil days, devotes two of his great sermons to this theme, and thus concludes: "our resignation to the will of God may be said to be perfect, when our will is lost and resolved up into His, when we rest in His will as our end, as being itself most just, and right, and good." This may be mysticism; but it is also practical Christianity. *Committal;* the entrusting of the life to the love of God. This is the privilege of a surrendered soul, to rest in perfect confidence, and enjoy perfect peace. See the sequence of the 3rd and 4th petitions of the Lord's Prayer; and note the beautiful order of faith—first, the will of God supreme; second, the welfare of man secure. Our Lord's description of trust reads like a dream, and is meant to be a reality (Matt. vi. 25-34; Luke xii. 22-34); and is realised in the experience and counsels of his disciples; (Phil. i. 20; iv. 11-13; Heb. xiii. 5, 6). *Communion;* the entrance of the spirit of man into immediate inter-

course with the Father, through the mediation of the Son (Heb. x. 19-22). Here at the point where the separateness of our life is raised to the point of union, we have passed beyond morality (John xvii. 11, 21, 22 ; Ephes. iii. 14-21). When the last hindrances of space and time shall have been removed, morality, in any sense in which it can be distinguished from religion, shall have ceased to be, and the service of earth, at its best so feeble and imperfect, shall be exchanged for the service of heaven, with its unknown ministries of glory and joy.

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